LESSONS FROM BIOGRAPHY

For Young Men.

Through twilight shades of good and ill
Ye now are panting up life's hill,
And more than common strength and skill
Must ye display,
If ye would give the better will
Its lawful sway.
[WORDSWORTH TO THE SONS OF BURNS.]

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PREFACE.

THIS volume consists in part of articles already published by the author in a popular periodical. They have been enlarged and new ones added. That the work may lead each of its readers to yield to their nobler aspirations, to acquire a more substantial morality; to cherish kinder feelings, and to seek an interest in religion, is the devout wish of the author.

H. B.

WARREN. R. I

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I.

A CHRISTIAN AMBITION.

ROMNEY—MONTGOMERY—CHURCHILL—COWPER.

I.

A CHRISTIAN AMBITION.

ROMNEY—MONTGOMERY—CHURCHILL—COWPER.

ROMNEY, the celebrated English painter, was a most worthy man, and highly regarded the dignity of his art. "He considered the act of painting," says Hayley, "as an act of devotion, in which he was expressing his gratitude to Heaven for such talents as were given him, by his solicitude to exert them in a manner that might conduce to the great interest of mankind." A lady once remarked in his presence that, "though emulation often produced evil among artists, it appeared necessary for calling forth their talents, and, if it were not for that spirit, there appeared nothing to

animate the genius of a painter." "Yes, there is," replied Romney, "and a more powerful incentive to laudable exertion." "Pray, sir, what is it?" asked the lady. "RELIGION!" was the emphatic answer.

We behold men eager for noise and applause. They rise by tremendous struggles. They set aside the requirements of religion and humanity that oppose them. They endeavour to uprear for themselves monuments that shall perpetuate their names for ages. They grow old, and find that they have followed what is heartless and unsubstantial. They die, and their names are soon forgotten, or live as idle sounds. The monuments of their fame crumble, and the records fall in an undistinguishable mass.

Religion leads men to realize accountableness for their particular gifts; it imparts to them the desire to elevate their species, and to be loved for what is good, rather than trumpeted for what is vain.

Religion is the foundation on which to build

a satisfactory life. "Length of days are in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Vanity is ephemeral, truth is eternal, and they alone who are leaders in the march of truth become canonized in the affections of men. A mere name with a few historic associations is as cold and uneloquent as the dumb marble on which it is chiselled.

"Marble frets and crumbles
Back into undistinguishable dust
At last, and epitaphs, grooved into brass,
Yield piecemeal to the hungry elements;
But truths that drop plumb to the depths of time
Anchor the name forever."*

James Montgomery is an admirable illustration of the power of religion in making life truly successful and praiseworthy. He devoted himself largely to missionary enterprises, and his name is intimately connected with most of

* "The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well, without the thought of fame."
LONGFELLOW.

the philanthropic movements of his times. The abolition of the cruel system of chimney-sweeping—a system by which the lives of children were imperilled and often sacrificed—owed much to his efforts, as did the abolition of slavery in the British colonies. He long edited a paper devoted to humane and Christian interests. His excellence as a Christian poet is universally acknowledged, and some of his lyrics will live as long as the language. He died an octogenarian, endeared to the poor of his country, and to all Christian denominations throughout the world. Montgomery was comparatively unambitious, but his deep, fervent piety bent his talents steadily to the noblest ends. It kept tender the sensibilities of youth; it destroyed the baser passions; it absorbed all the energies in the one great effort to elevate and regenerate mankind. He gave to the world his sympathy, and the sympathy of the world was his; he gave to religion the full scope of his abilities, and left his name on the imperishable pages of Christian history. "As

all of my hymns," he remarked, in his last days, "embody some portion of the joys or sorrows, the hopes or the fears, of this poor heart, so I cannot doubt that they will be found an acceptable vehicle of the expression of the experience of many of my fellow-creatures who may be similarly exercised during the pilgrimage of their Christian life." How unselfish the motives that prompted such compositions! How delightful to recall the labours of such a life! Biography affords few incidents more pleasing than that of the venerable poet at the Church Missionary Jubilee of 1848. It was celebrated simultaneously in all the departments of the Society throughout the world. Montgomery was called upon to compose the hymn for the great occasion,—a hymn that would surround the world in the same intercessory and jubilant strains. Of this says a writer, "Montgomery is, perhaps, the only Christian poet who ever had the high distinction of being called upon by the Church of Christ to compose, and by the great Head of

the Church permitted to take part in singing, a strain that might literally be said to have surrounded the earth with one grand melody, carried on simultaneously with the entire 'circuit of the sun.'" This indeed was glory. But it was more glorious to be enabled to exclaim at last, in the fulness of his faith,—

"My Father's house on high!
Home of my soul! how near,
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye
Thy golden gates appear!

"I hear at morn and even,
At noon and midnight hour,
The choral harmonies of heaven
Seraphic music pour."

The ambitious Voltaire in his last days entered Paris in triumph. He was crowned in public, and hailed as the Sophocles and Homer of France. He thanked the admiring populace for the glory under which he declared he was about to expire. "What a wretched glory you have produced me!" he said to his atheistical friends a short time after, as he saw his approaching end. How great is the contrast

between the infidel hero of France and the poet-philanthropist of England at the close of a life of fame!

The poet Churchill was a most ambitious man. For distinction he threw off the clerical gown, turned his back upon the truths of Christianity, prostituted his genius and his pen, and became a leader of political faction. The *Rosciad* placed him at once in the front rank of the literary men of his age. It is said to have caused a greater sensation than any poem that had previously appeared in England. His literary career was brief but dazzling, and, although the censure of strong and able men somewhat abated its applause, it gratified his desire for renown. Self-exiled from religion, he freely gratified his passions, and died at the early age of thirty-three. But humanity owed him no debt, and his fame proved a mere coruscation, and left him but little save a blackened name. Lord Byron seems to have visited the grave of Churchill, as among his miscellaneous poems we find one entitled "*Churchill's*

Grave: a Fact literally rendered." It is one of the most artless of Byron's compositions, and could not have been written at a very long period after Churchill's death. The record is touching and melancholy. We quote the opening lines:—

> I stood beside the grave of him who blazed
> The comet of a season, and I saw
> The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
> With not the less of sorrow and of awe,
> On that neglected turf and quiet stone
> With names no clearer than the names unknown
> Which lay unread around it; and I ask'd
> The gardener of the ground why it might be
> That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
> Through the thick deaths of half a century?
> And thus he answered: 'Well, I do not know
> Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
> He died before my day of sextonship,
> And I had not the digging of this grave."
> And is this all? I thought—"

What a requital for such a sacrifice,—for shortened life, a disgraceful character and a ruined soul! Better that he had remained a humble curate. He then might have ennobled some immortal minds, and the world would have

been better for his existence. Let the student who is feeding the flame of an inordinate ambition learn a lesson from Churchill's grave.

How different from the lines of Byron are those of Mrs. Browning on the Grave of Cowper! Notwithstanding his mind was darkened with settled melancholy, and that he entertained the idea that he was an outcast from the comforts of religion, Cowper steadily laboured for the happiness and religious elevation of mankind, and made himself one of the world's benefactors. We quote the first four stanzas of *Cowper's Grave:*—

"It is a place where poets crown'd
May feel the heart's decaying,—
It is a place where happy saints
May weep amid their praying:
Yet let the grief and humbleness
As low as silence languish;
Earth surely now may give her calm
To whom she gave her anguish.

"O poets! from a maniac's tongue
Was pour'd the deathless singing!
O Christians! at your cross of hope
A hopeless hand was clinging!

O men! this man in brotherhood,
Your weary paths beguiling,
Groan'd inly while he taught you peace,
And died while you were smiling.

And now, what time ye all may read
Through dimming tears his story,—
How discord on the music fell,
And darkness on the glory,—
And how, when, one by one, sweet sounds
And wandering lights departed,
He wore no less a loving face,
Because so broken-hearted.

He shall be strong to sanctify
The poet's high vocation,
And bow the meekest Christian down
In meeker adoration;
Nor ever shall he be in praise
By wise or good forsaken;
Named softly as the household name
Of one whom God hath taken!"

Mere earthly glory soon loses its lustre and grows dim in the multitudinous events of time. It will do us no good in the charnel-house; we may not carry it with us to the unseen world; and in the light of eternity how mean and trivial it appears! It will matter but little whether a sprig of laurel or rosemary is cast into our graves; but it will be all-important

whether or not the world has been made better by our existence. Like the breeze and sunlight of spring, that woo the grass and the flowers and prepare the way for the great millennial of the harvest, or as the blight that dwarfs and distorts the lovely and useful in nature, will be our influence. That influence will be irrevocable. How sad is the thought of leaving the world worse for our existence,—of having degraded those whom we might have ennobled,—of being remembered with disrespect, when we might have left memories that would have brightened up like sudden angels in thoughtful and sorrowful hours,—of casting ourselves away from happiness here and from God forever, when we might have experienced the highest earthly joys, have helped fill heaven with angels, and have received thrones and crowns for our eternal reward! Without religion we have no God to whom to look for direction, or to bless our endeavours in ennobling our species. We are living for immortality and exerting immortal influences, and

without religion our best efforts will be comparatively inconsequential. Young architect of the structure of life, let religion be your corner-stone, and, standing at last on the pinnacle, you may catch at once the grateful plaudits of the world and the hallelujahs of the immortals!

"Years have been lost! up, stir thee to redeem
All that of life may yet be thine; who knows
How little? Life is but a scanty ledge,
Where the poor pilgrim walks suspended 'twixt
Two fathomless abysses, hell and heaven.
Oh, let him heed his footing, heed his side!
Dangers surround him momently; and each
May sweep him to the unknown, next which he stands,
There to reside forever, blest or curst."

II.

YOUTH IN ITS RELATIONS TO A LONG AND SATISFACTORY LIFE.

WESLEY—BURNS—JOHNSON—HARTLEY COLERIDGE—SHELLEY.

II.

YOUTH IN ITS RELATIONS TO A LONG AND SATISFACTORY LIFE.

WESLEY — BURNS — JOHNSON — HARTLEY
COLERIDGE — SHELLEY.

ABOUT a century ago there might have been seen in England a venerable reformer, journeying from town to town, engaged in a fatherly oversight of the numerous churches he had been instrumental in gathering. More than eighty years had silvered his hair and furrowed his brow,—years of struggle and hardship; for he had excited the displeasure of the irreligious, had faced riots and borne persecution, had journeyed from country to country, had preached more than forty thousand sermons, and had aroused the world to a

deeper conviction of the need of repentance and of a higher Christian life. He had heeded not hardship; his mind was in uninterrupted communion with God; and a sense of security, a sweet and abiding happiness, attended it. He could write in his Journal of the stormy scenes of the past, "Those days will return no more, and are, therefore, as though they had never been."

"Pain, disappointment, sickness, strife
Whate'er molests or troubles life,
However grievous in its stay
It shakes the tenement of clay,
When past, as nothing we esteem,
And pain, like pleasure, is a dream."

The storm of persecution had long since spent its fury, and he enjoyed the love of more than a hundred thousand disciples, and commanded the respect and veneration of the world. As he passed from chapel to chapel which had sprung up during his itinerancy, a shadow might have overcast his countenance; for his old followers were dead, and cottage after cottage reminded him of those whose

prayers and praises were wont to mingle with his, but who now slept with their fathers. Everywhere he passed the graves of the friends of his early years. Three generations of men had felt the force of his eloquence. After wandering among the graves in his native village, he says, "I felt the truth that 'One generation goeth, and another cometh.' See how the earth drops its inhabitants, as the tree drops its leaves." But the vigour of his youth remained; he made long and frequent journeys, preached often, wrote much. He visited Holland twice after he became an octogenarian, looking after the spiritual interests of his followers. Upon completing his eighty-second year, he says, "Is any thing too hard for God? It is now eleven years since I have felt any such thing as weariness. Many times I speak till my voice fails and I can speak no longer; frequently I walk till my strength fails and I can walk no farther: yet even then I feel no sensation of weariness, but am perfectly easy, from head

to foot." A year later he says, "I am a wonder to myself. I am never tired (such is the goodness of God) either with writing, preaching, or travelling." At length he became a valetudinarian, but without suffering: his physical powers, free from the poison of vice, were exempt from pain, but gradually decayed. "I am an old man now," he wrote, in his eighty-seventh year, "decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim; my right hand shakes much; my mouth is hot and dry every morning; I have a lingering fever almost every day; my motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God! I do not slack my labours: I can preach and write still." Many love to treasure up the remarkable testimonies of closing life; few such testimonies are sweeter than his:—"Eighty-seven years have I sojourned on this earth, endeavouring to do good." Slowly, slowly, lower, lower, sunk the sun of life in its setting; no cloud or haze obscured its departing glory; it fell at last, but

"left a track of glory in the skies."

The physical powers of the venerable father were exhausted, and

> "The weary springs of life at last stood still."

That man was John Wesley,—great as a reformer, great as an ecclesiastic, but greater yet as one who had faithfully used the powers given him by God.

Such a close of life, a serene old age, blessed with the recollection of eminent usefulness, is a favourite day-dream of the young, and one that may be realized. God has promised length of days and peace to those who keep his commandments; and physical vigour, mental health, a hale manhood and a long life are the natural results of pious opinions and practices. Religion is the guardian of health, as well as the hope of the soul:

> "Soft peace she brings; wherever she arrives,
> She builds our quiet as she forms our lives,
> Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
> And opens in each breast a little heaven."

"It was a principle among the ancients," says Dr. Johnson,—whose piety was a means

of prolonging his life to a ripe old age, and of saving him from hereditary insanity,—"that acute diseases are from heaven, and chronic from ourselves: the dart of death, indeed, falls from heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct: to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly."

"The colour of our whole life," says Cowper, "is generally such as the three or four first years in which we are our own masters make it." Whatever truth there may be in this remark, a virtuous youth must be the foundation of a long and happy life.

I. A young man must possess harmony of character to insure a satisfactory life. Though he be honest, generous and piously inclined, if he is intemperate, he is degraded in his own estimation and in that of the world. Though he possess versatile talents and unexceptionable morals, if he lack energy, he will accomplish nothing. Though he have energy and integrity, if he is a slave to a rash and capri-

cious temper, his life, graced though it may be with the monuments of his industry, will be interspersed with ruins; men will recoil from him, and he will be unhappy. And though he be moral, amiable and energetic, if he lack piety and the hopes of a better life, an unrest will remain. It will profit him nothing if he fulfils his purpose in life and loses his soul.

We behold an inferior class of men, possessing ability, refinement and many excellences, but victims of temptation. They are thrown off their guard, are drawn into error; they indulge cautiously at first, but vice soon masters their reason, enchains their will, and enthrones itself in the soul. They are conscious of the right, without the power to pursue it. Their will is infected. They at length become indifferent to the opinions of the world, and their downward course is rapid. They die, their vices having robbed them of half their days. They go to tearless graves, and are forgotten. The years roll on,—years of whose

pleasures they might have partaken,—years in which they might have been conspicuous actors,—years that might have encircled their brow with the silver crown of age and have given them the benediction of a lamented death and an honoured grave.

The early years of the marvellous old man whose declining life we have pictured were not only unblemished by vice, but were marked by pious opinions and by religious habits strict in the extreme. His home was a garden of piety; and when he became a student at Oxford his principles were settled. He lived abstemiously, visited the erring and the unfortunate, and refused to comply with the fashions of the times, that he might give the more to the poor. Ridicule fell powerless before his iron purpose to shape his life to the will of God. "I resolved," he writes, on one occasion, "to have no companions by chance, but by choice, and to choose those only who would help me on my way to heaven." He was inflexible in principle; and his brother

once remarked that he believed no one could alter his mind but Him that made it. He wasted no time, indulged in no amusements. His mother was a learned and an eminently pious woman, and he was accustomed to consult her concerning nice points of morals. "Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure," she wrote to him, on one occasion, "take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things,—in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind,—that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."

Let us glance at the life of the well-known domestic poet, Robert Burns.

"Allen (Lord Holland's Allen,—the best-informed and one of the ablest men I know,—a devourer of books, and an observer of men) has lent me a quantity of Burns's unpublished and never-to-be-published letters. . .

What an antithetical mind! Tenderness, roughness, delicacy, coarseness, sentiment, sensuality, soaring and grovelling, dirt and deity, all mixed up in one compound of inspired clay." Thus, in his journal, wrote Lord Byron of Burns. What was the result of this want of moral symmetry? Stung to the quick by the exposure of a grave error, he fled to Edinburgh, where his poetical fame had preceded him, and there received a most flattering reception from savans. He was made welcome to the gayest and most fashionable society; female grace and beauty threw around him their charms; and even Dr. Blair and the Earl of Glencairn were among his admirers and patrons. But, while thus honoured, he gave loose reins to his perverse inclinations, and was drawn into the too congenial ripple of dissolute society. Dissipation fastened itself upon his character, and, against the protest of his conscience and his better judgment, held him in bondage during the rest of his life. He lamented his lapses

and struggled against temptation, but lacked the moral energy to recover himself. The following poem, written in prospect of death, and perhaps the most melancholy poem that Burns ever wrote, shows how pitiable was his moral situation:—

"Fain would I say, 'Forgive my foul offence,
Fain promise never more to disobey;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way
Again in folly's paths might go astray,
Again exalt the brute and sink the man.
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly mercy's plan,
Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation ran?

"O thou, great Governor of all below,
If I may dare a lifted eye to thee,
Thy nod can bid the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the raging of an angry sea;
With that controlling power assist e'en me
These headlong, furious passions to confine,
For all unfit I feel my power to be
To rule their current in the allowéd line:
Oh, aid me with thy strength, Omnipotence Divine!"

The close of his life was sad. He returned from a dinner at a tavern, one bitter cold night, intoxicated; his health was poor, and

the exposure fastened disease incurably upon him. He rallied, but grew worse again, and died in apparent unconcern respecting his future state.

Young reader, can you believe it possible that these pleasant years may be bearing you to an end like this?—that the time will come when some evil propensity will mock at your reason, lead captive your will, and seal your fate for sorrow,—sorrow here, sorrow hereafter; when death will seem fearful, and life, degrading you ever lower, will seem, perhaps, more fearful than death; when you shall look hopelessly up to heaven and beseech the Omnipotent to save you from yourself; when "the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thy heart wherewith thou shalt

fear, and the sight of thy eyes wherewith thou shalt see"? No, no: these days of innocence conceal the power of the passions and the temptations of the world. No one dreams of spiritual orphanage in youth,—of a time when manhood shall be lost, the soul self-imprisoned, and life become a dismal heritage of physical torture and of low, grovelling, hopeless, suicidal thoughts.

"The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those who walk in darkness: on the sea
The boldest steer but where their ports invite;
But there are wanderers o'er eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er
shall be."

II. Energy, activity, useful employment, must accompany a harmonious character. It is the disuse and not the use of the faculties, the rust and not the friction of life, that enervates the body and unsettles the mind. A wholesome use of the powers of the mind and body answers the purpose of life and gives moral and physical stamina. "How is this," asks Wesley in old age, "that I find just the

same strength as I did thirty years ago?—that my sight is considerably better now and my nerves firmer than they were then?—that I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is the good pleasure of God, who does whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief means are my constantly rising at four o'clock for about fifty years; my generally preaching at five in the morning,—one of the most healthy exercises in the world; my never travelling less, by sea or land, than four thousand five hundred miles a year."

Employment is a most efficient remedy against temptation. It is men of leisure, and not hard-working scholars, farmers or mechanics, that make wrecks of their existence. It is the gay saloon, and not the workshop, that stops the machinery of life. Men whose thoughts are constantly directed to some noble end never dabble in the follies and vices of life; time is too precious, their sense of responsibility too keen.

"My indolence since my last reception of the sacrament," once wrote Dr. Johnson, "has sunk into grosser sluggishness, and my dissipation spread into wilder negligence. My thoughts have been clouded with sensuality, and, except that from the beginning of this year I have, in some measure, forborne excess in strong drink, my appetites have predominated over my reason. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year, and perceive that incidents and intelligence pass over me without leaving any impression."

He then solemnly adds,—

"THIS IS NOT THE LIFE TO WHICH HEAVEN IS PROMISED."

Hartley Coleridge, the son of the great poet, and the author of some excellent sonnets, was a gifted and kind-hearted man. His conversational talent was unusual,—rich in scholarship, wit, whim, fancy; and his parentage gave him prominence in literary circles. He numbered among his friends Southey, Wordsworth and

Christopher North. But, with all these advantages, he possessed no force of character, no steady purpose, but became intemperate; and while he was familiar with some of the strongest and most notable men of his times, he made intimate friends of common ale-house idlers, and wasted his time and talents with them at the inn. He was left much to himself in youth, and the idle and roving habits he then formed followed him through life. He struggled hard to gain a fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford; he lived soberly and studied well for more than eleven months of his probationary year, when some dissolute friends from London visited him, made him a truant, and got him intoxicated, and he was consequently proscribed. His subsequent life was aimless. He was prodigal of time, and was accustomed to seek in dissolute habits and garrulous society a refuge from the tedium of life. He seems to have become indifferent to the opinions of others; he spent his annuity at his pleasure, and often went hungry and was

obliged to beg the loan of a sixpence. His death was untimely. He attempted to return from a dinner-party, in a state of intoxication, on a cold winter's night. He was unable to reach home until morning, evidently becoming unconscious on the way. The exposure brought on sickness. He rallied, carelessly exposed himself, relapsed, and died.

"It was sweet as well as sorrowful," says Miss Martineau, "to see how he was mourned. Everybody, from his old landlady, who cared for him like a mother, to the infant-school-children, missed Hartley Coleridge. I went to his funeral at Grasmere. The rapid Rotha rippled and dashed over the stones beside the church-yard; the yews rose dark from the faded grass of the graves, and in mighty contrast to both, Helvellyn stood, in wintry silence, and sheeted with spotless snow. Among the mourners Wordsworth was conspicuous, with his white hair and patriarchal aspect. He had no cause for painful emotions on his own account; for he had been a faithful

friend to the doomed victim who was now beyond the reach of his tempters. While there was any hope that stern remonstrance might rouse the feeble will and strengthen the suffering conscience to relieve itself, such remonstrance was pressed; and when the case was past hope, Wordsworth's door was ever open to his old friend's son."*

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* We need not go abroad to find gifted men whose lives are admonitory.

A clergyman thus pens the death-bed scene of one who ranks among the most eminent poets of our country:—

"On a chilly and wet November evening I received a note stating that a man answering to the name of Edgar Allen Poe, who claimed to know me, was at a drinking-saloon in Lombard Street, in Baltimore, in a state of deep intoxication and great destitution. I repaired immediately to the spot. It was an election-day. When I entered the bar-room of the house, I instantly recognized the face of one whom I had often seen and knew well, although it wore an aspect of vacant stupidity that made me shudder. The intellectual flash of his eye had vanished, or rather had been quenched in the bowl, but the broad capacious forehead of the author of 'The Raven,' as you have appropriately designated him, was still there,—with width in the region of ideality such as few men ever possessed. * * * * He was so utterly stupefied with liquor that I thought it best not to seek recognition or conversation, especially as he was sur-

III. A life to be long and happy must be overruled and solaced by religion.

To live at peace with God, with our own conscience, with all mankind,—to supplicate

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rounded by a crowd of gentlemen actuated by idle curiosity rather than sympathy. I immediately ordered a room for him where he could be comfortable until I got word to his relatives,—for there were several in Baltimore. Just at that moment one or two of the persons referred to, getting information, arrived at the spot. They declined to take private care of him, for the reason that he had been very abusive and ungrateful on all occasions when drunk, and advised that he be sent to an hospital. He was accordingly placed in a coach and conveyed to the Washington College Hospital, and put under the care of a competent and attentive resident physician of that institution. So insensible was he, that we had to carry him to a carriage as if a corpse. The muscles of articulation seemed paralyzed to speechlessness, and mere incoherent mutterings were all that were heard.

"He died in the hospital after some three or four days, during which time he enjoyed only occasional and fitful seasons of consciousness. His disease, as will have been anticipated, was *mania a potu*,—a disease whose finale is always fearful in its maniacal manifestations. In one of his more lucid moments, when asked by the physician whether he would like to see his friends, he exclaimed, 'Friends! My best friend would be he who would take a pistol and blow my brains out, and thus relieve me of my agony.' These were among his last words."

our daily blessings, and to feel that Christ abides with us,—that, come life or death or any event, we are safe in His hands who disposes all things,—that, though the earth dissolve and the heavens flee away, we have a Deliverer,—that God will overrule our lives to our good and his glory,—to reflect, in each disappointment and sorrow, that we are treading the verge of a better and happier life,—this is satisfaction, perfect peace,—

"The calm, deep joy of a confiding thought;"

and this alone.

Says Wesley, after reading, in early life, Kempis's "Imitation of Christ," "Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God,—all my thoughts and words and actions,—being thoroughly convinced there was no medium." Here was something fundamental.

A few years after the death of Wesley, there appeared at Oxford a student with a brilliant intellect and a consuming ambition, who aspired to be a reformer. The thought of

eminent usefulness filled his chivalrous imagination, and pictured the future as a long succession of happy years, solaced by tributes of affection and brilliant with the trophies of fame. But piety had taken no root in his soul, and his aspirations turned not towards God, but towards philosophy and distinction. He read Hume;—there was something bold in standing aloof from Christianity and treating it as trivial:—he imbibed the poison of the great historian, and aspired to reform the world; not after the pattern of Christ or the law of God, but after the wild schemes of his truant imagination. He dreamed, speculated, and wrote a pamphlet on the "Necessity of Atheism." He sent it boldly to the heads of the colleges, and was expelled from the university. He married, and, still bent on reform, he went to Ireland, "the theatre," as he expressed it, "the widest and fairest for the operations of the determined friends of religious and political freedom." But his schemes were too impractical to command respect, and he

returned a baffled and disappointed man. He deserted his young wife, and sought the companionship of a more brilliant and gifted lady. His wife ended her unhappy life by suicide, and he married the guilty woman of his choice. He became a socialist, and assailed the institution of marriage, and propagated the doctrine that love and not wedlock should govern the social and domestic relations of life. He became a poet, and published an elaborate poem, a sublime metrical essay on reform. But the plaudits of fame fell on a heavy heart. He left England and visited the grand old cities of the continent. Arrived at Naples, sick in body and sick at heart, the young reformer thus speaks of his blighted hopes and his weary, dreary inner life:—

"Alas! I have not hope nor health,
Nor peace within, nor calm around,
Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
The sage in meditation found,
And walk'd with inward glory crown'd,—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround:

Smiling they live, and call life pleasure.
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure."

* * * * * * * * * * *

"I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear,
Till sleep, like death, might steal on me.
And I might feel, in the warm air,
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony."

He wandered with his family amid the magnificent ruins of ancient Italy,—to Rome, to Pæstum, to Pompeii, to Herculaneum, to Baiæ, and again to the city of the Cæsars. Rome's storied past and fading glory kindled all the romance of his nature; and, amid scenes historic with a thousand events and with varied and antithetical destinies, his genius blazed forth in a phœnix-like song. The shadows of life thickened round him; the age of thirty found him gray, withered and old, with a fame forever linked to reproach.

Speaking of the censure of the world, he writes to his wife, "When I hear of such things, my patience and my philosophy are put

to a severe proof, while I refrain from seeking some obscure place, where the countenance of man may never meet me more. * * * * Imagine my despair of good; imagine how it is impossible that one of so weak and sensitive a nature as mine can further run the gauntlet through the hellish society of man."

Again: "My greatest comfort would be utterly to desert all human society. I would retire with you and our children to a solitary island in the sea, would build a boat, and shut upon my retreat the floodgates of the world. I would read no reviews; I would talk with no authors. If I dared trust my imagination, it would tell me there are one or two chosen companions besides yourself whom I should desire. But to this I would not listen. Where two or three are gathered together, the devil is among them." A storm at sea ended the drama-like life of this unhappy man—Shelley.

There is a marked difference between the lives of the author of "Prometheus Unbound" and of the itinerant preacher of Kingswood and of Bristol.

III.

A SUCCESSFUL LIFE WITHIN THE REACH OF ALL.

EMINENT MEN WHO HAVE DIED EARLY—WHO HAVE OVERCOME OBSTACLES—ILLUSTRATIONS FROM BURTON—MRS. E. C. JUDSON—PROF. HEYNE.

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RESPECT and love, competence and position, eminent usefulness and a name perpetuated in books, in oratory and marble, are the day-dreams that impart a peculiar romance to the opening period of life. Does the youth read of statesmen?—he beholds himself amid pillars and arches on which art has lavished her splendours, swaying senates by the richness and the irresistible power of his

eloquence. Of authors and poets?—the blaze of his genius illuminates the world and casts a weird and romantic glory on the ages. Of heroes?—he beholds himself amid glittering pageants and surrounded by applauding multitudes, and holding a place forever among the names that are linked to national destinies. Of reformers?—his whole soul kindles at the thought of exalted usefulness: he elevates mankind; he leads men to the foot of the cross and to the everlasting glories of the redeemed. All dream; few realize their anticipations. All have thought,—

> "Oh for some busy circumstance, at once
> To take the cloud from off our starry thoughts,
> And let their glory constellate the dark!"

few give themselves up to the labour that produces results.

A successful life depends upon powers that all may exercise,—energy and perseverance. It is within the reach of all. "The hand of the diligent," says the proverb, "shall rule." Not more surely does the crop reward the

labour of the husbandman, than success the active, persevering efforts of the candidate for an honourable place and name. Wealth and hereditary honours cannot impart scholarship, nor link names with the great discoveries of science, nor make men pre-eminent in the halls of state or in the studies of art.

> "Destiny is not
> About thee, but within: thyself must make
> Thyself; the agonizing throes of thought,—
> These bring forth glory, bring forth destiny."

All that is great and praiseworthy comes of *action*. Dreams and aspirations, of themselves, cannot make successful men. A day of action will accomplish more than a year of dreaming. "For me," says Cicero, "*ne otium quidem unquam otiosum*,"—"even my leisure hours have their occupation."

How much may be accomplished by an active life may be estimated by what famous men have done in a brief period and under the most adverse circumstances. Henry Kirke White died at the age of twenty-one, and Chat-

terton still earlier. Beaumont died at twenty-nine; George Dana Boardman at thirty; Henry Watson Fox at thirty-one; Sir Philip Sidney at thirty-two; Otway at thirty-four; Mozart at thirty-five; Byron, Collins, and James Gregory at thirty-six; Burns and Raphael at thirty-seven; Pascal and Torricelli at thirty-nine. Cromwell was forty years old when he entered the army. Cowper was fifty when he commenced his literary career. Boethius's "Consolations of Philosophy" was written while the author was under sentence of death. Bunyan wrote his great allegory during imprisonment; and the Spanish classical work, "Don Quixote," was written under the same disadvantage. Homer, Milton, Blacklock, Anna Williams, and Prescott the historian, were blind. Alexander Cruden, the author of the "Concordance of the Old and New Testaments," commenced the work while a bookseller, and revised and completed it during insanity. Herschel self-educated himself in astronomy while teaching music. Sebastian

Castalio was obliged to work in the fields, and could only devote the morning hours to study. Henry Kirke White was obliged to earn his livelihood while a boy, but devoted the remnant of his time most assiduously to study, allowing himself but little sleep. He acquainted himself with the classical and modern languages, with the sciences, with music and drawing, with various literary knowledge, and entered the university with high honour, and won an imperishable name as a poet, and yet died at the early age we have recorded. Men frequently place themselves in high positions by their activity during a period comparatively brief. Many accomplish more during a single decade than in all their subsequent life.

The essentials to success place all men on an equal footing. The rich cannot become eminent for usefulness while living at ease; the gifted cannot become known to the world while avoiding exertion. If wealth is an auxiliary to eminence, poverty is a powerful incentive.

If unusual gifts facilitate high attainments, moderate talents promote exertion. Men of moderate abilities have frequently made themselves familiar to the world; and civilization and progress are the work of men born to want and inured to hardship. Homer, Luther, Ferguson, Franklin, Burns, Cook and Columbus all knew the want of a wholesome sustenance. Æsop was a slave, and Bunyan a poor tinker. The father of Haydn was a wheelwright and sexton, and his mother a servant. Benvenuto Cellini, Hogarth, Ramsay, Gay and Linnæus were apprentices. The fathers of Akenside and Kirke White were butchers. The father of Shakspeare was very illiterate. Sir Richard Arkwright was the youngest of thirteen children, and was bred to the profession of a barber. Robert Bloomfield was a poor orphan, and put out to service to a farmer, and subsequently to his brother, a shoemaker. John and Charles Wesley were the sons of a poor village vicar, whose income afforded but a scanty support to his numerous family.

Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," gives some interesting illustrations of the disadvantages against which many remarkable men in ancient times had to contend. "Hannibal had but one eye; Appius Claudius, Timoleon, blind; as were Muleasse King of Tunis, John King of Bohemia, and Tiresias the prophet. . . . Homer was blind; yet who, saith Tully, made more accurate, lively or better descriptions with both his eyes? Democritus was blind; yet, as Laertius writes of him, he saw more than all Greece beside. . . . Æsop was crooked, Socrates purblind, Democritus withered, Seneca lean and harsh, ugly to behold; yet show me so many flourishing wits, such divine spirits. Horace, a little, bleared-eyed, contemptible fellow; yet who so sententious and wise? Marcilius Ficinus, Faber Stapulensis, a couple of dwarfs; Melancthon, a short, hard-favoured man; yet of incomparable parts all three. Galba the emperor was crook-backed; Epictetus, lame; the great Alexander, a little man of stature; Augustus

Cæsar, of the same pitch; Agesilaus, *despicabili forma;* Boccharis, a most deformed prince as ever Egypt had, yet, as Diodorus Siculus records of him, in wisdom and knowledge far beyond his predecessors."

Some thirty-five years ago there lived in the rural districts of New York a little girl of a slender constitution, but of a strong spirit and of lofty aspirations. Her parents were barely able to provide a sustenance, and she was sent to work in the factory. She speaks of her recollections of "noise and filth, bleeding hands and sore feet, and a very sad heart." She aspired to be an author and a missionary, and to raise her parents to competence. What a day-dream for a slender little factory-girl! She employed her leisure in reading and study, and entered the academy. "On Monday morning," she says, "I used to arise at two o'clock, and do the washing for the family and boarders. Before nine on Thursday evening I did the ironing; and Saturday, because there was but half a day of school, we made baking-

day. I also took sewing of a mantua-maker close by, and so continued to make good the time consumed in school. My classmates had spent all their lives in school, and they now had plenty of leisure for study. They were also, all but one, older than myself, and I therefore found it a difficult task to keep up with them without robbing my sleeping hours. I seldom got any rest till one or two o'clock, and then I read French and solved mathematical problems in my sleep." She obtained an education, and at the age of fifteen commenced teaching, and soon won an excellent local reputation as a teacher. She continued to cultivate her mind, and acquainted herself extensively with literature. At about twenty-one, she commenced writing for the local press. Her poems were marked by strength, beauty and pathos, and attracted attention. She at length accepted a place as teacher in the Utica Female Seminary, and employed her leisure in writing books for children. These compositions developed her genius, and she ventured before

the public as a writer for periodical literature, and rose rapidly to fame. For nearly two years she was the most conspicuous writer in the country; and there was no society, however affluent, cultivated or honoured, to whom her company was not interesting. "My life," she writes to an intimate friend, "has been full of changes. Without one of my own kindred to assist me, I have struggled with almost every kind of difficulty up to the present moment. Even *you* cannot dream of half that I have borne. Heaven knows, enough to make me humble. Within the last year,—one short year,—I have gained for myself a position which others have been all their lives in attaining, and I have a right to be proud of it. You may tell me it is a small thing to be a magazine-writer. So it is. But it is not a small thing for a woman, thrown upon her own resources, and standing entirely alone, to be able to command respect from everybody, rising by her own individual efforts above the accidents of fortune." She helped her parents in pro-

viding for themselves a comfortable home, and married a most distinguished missionary, and consecrated her life to the missionary service, thus realizing her youthful day-dreams. It is, perhaps, needless to mention the name, Mrs. Emily Chubbuck Judson.

Professor Heyne of Göttingen was a most eminent classical writer and lecturer, and one of the most profound scholars of his age. His father was a poor weaver. "Want," he says, "was the companion of my childhood. I well remember the painful impressions made on my mind by witnessing the distress of my mother when without food for her children. How often have I seen her, on a Saturday evening, weeping and wringing her hands, as she returned home from an unsuccessful effort to sell the goods which the daily and nightly toil of my father had manufactured." He was early sent to school, and discovered remarkable abilities; and, before he was eleven years of age, he defrayed a part of his tuition by teaching the daughter of a wealthy neighbour to read and

write. His god-father afforded him some assistance, but so limited were his circumstances at the seminary of Chemnitz, that he was unable to purchase the necessary books, and was often obliged to copy his lessons from those of his companions. He entered the University at Leipsic, having received the promise of assistance. The aid was for a time withheld, and he was destitute of books, and would have been destitute of food had it not been for the compassion of a maid-servant of the house in which he lodged. He became so absorbed in his studies at the university that, for six months, he allowed himself but two nights' sleep in a week. In the midst of great pecuniary distress, he was offered a place as tutor in a family at Magdeburg. The appointment would remove him from the scene of his studies; and he refused it, resolving to suffer almost any thing rather than not complete his education. He was subsequently offered a like situation in the university town. He accepted this, but continued his studies with so much

assiduity as to bring on a dangerous illness, during which he was reduced again to the most extreme poverty. He relieved his wants by publishing some scholarly works he had written. He obtained a finished education, but lived for many years in comparative obscurity, and subject to changing fortunes. His classical writings at last attracted the attention of scholars, and he was successfully nominated to the Hanoverian minister for the Professorship of Eloquence in the University of Göttingen. His subsequent career was one of influence, emolument and celebrity.*

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* The last two examples are not to be imitated in one respect,—that of devoting the night to study. The early death of Kirke White illustrates the melancholy results of such a course. But they show the self-denial and struggles by which talent is developed and men of position are made.

"The slow,
Still process of the rain, distilling down
The great sweat of the sea, is never seen
In the consummate spectacle flash'd forth,
A snow-hued arch, upon the clouds of heaven:
So never sees the world those energies,
Strong effort, and long patience, which have stirr'd
In low obscurity, and slowly heaved
Its darkness up, till sudden glory springs
Forth from it, arching like a perfect rainbow."

The world is full of disappointed men. They all possessed high aspirations in youth, but their energy was impulsive, and accomplished nothing; or they allowed frivolities to ensnare them, and to keep out of sight the great purposes of life. Reader, do you aspire to honour, competence and influence? Act!—else your glittering day-dreams will be the nearest approach to the objects of your desire. Act!—or you may write your name in water and behold the emblem of your destiny. Yield to amusement, show, fashion,—idle in bar- and counting-rooms,—waste your abilities and energies in the low animal delights of the bowl,—and your narcotics will deaden your conscience and sensibilities, and cast you upon a pitiless world, when repentance is too late. Act for humanity! Living for ends that terminate in yourself is to write yourself a cipher; the world would be as well without your existence. Act for Christ! Be a sun, and not a satellite; surround yourself with a halo of moral glory; sublimate your nature to

angelic heights! Pray! You need not be subject to an uncertain destiny. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass."*

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* "Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,—
These unbought sports,—that happy state,—
I would not fear nor wish my fate,
But boldly say, each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day."
COWLEY (at the age of thirteen).

IV.

NATURE'S NOBLEMEN.

BARON CUVIER—GEORGE STEPHENSON—WILLIAM COBBETT—THE BUNHILL FIELDS.

IV.

NATURE'S NOBLEMEN.

"Think ye the lofty foreheads of the world,
That gleam like full moons through the night of time,
Holding their calm, big splendour steadily,
Forever at the toss of history,—
Think ye they rush'd up with a suddenness
Of rockets sportively shot into heaven,
And flared to their immortal places there?"

BARON CUVIER—GEORGE STEPHENSON—WILLIAM COBBETT—THE BUNHILL FIELDS.

INTELLIGENCE and an honest purpose are essential to success. Men of intelligence are not only pre-eminent in the common affairs of life, and in art, science and literature, but they sway the currents of popular thought and feeling, thus shaping the policies of governments and the destinies of nations, and creating

those moral revolutions that hasten the universal triumph of civilization and of the gospel of Christ. Well-directed intelligence will live, and is a title to a higher and more enduring nobility than that which the accidents of birth or the caprices of royalty confer. The name of Newton is coexistent with the laws that govern the universe, and the names of Galileo and Herschel with the stars of heaven; and no prince or king has so enduring a memorial. The names and the works of the cultivated men of antiquity remain, while the potentates of their times are but vaguely known, and the haughty men who figured in the courts of those potentates are forgotten. Kepler was poor, but declared that he would rather be the author of the works he had written than to possess the duchy of Saxony. The declaration was wise and noble.

Superior intelligence is the result of hard study and heroic self-denial; and stability of purpose requires exertion. "Excellence," Sir Joshua Reynolds used to say of painting, "is

never granted to a man but as a reward of labour." "Those who would excel," he declared, "must go to their work, willing or unwilling, and will find it no play, but, on the contrary, very hard labour." True greatness is born of the agony of thought, after years of privation, toil and unrest, and confronts the world at last, eloquent and commanding, and exerts an influence that the wealthy and titled may covet in vain.

"Go mummify
Thy name within that architectural pile
Which others' intellect has builded; none,—
For all the hieroglyphs of glory,—none
Save but the builder's name shall sound along
The everlasting ages. Heart and brain
Of thine must resolutely yoke themselves
To slow-paced years of toil; else all the trumps
Of hero-heraldry that ever twang'd,
Gather'd in one mad blaze above thy grave,
Shall not avail to resurrect thy name
To the salvation of remembrance then
When once the letters of it have sunk back
Into the alphabet from off thy tomb."

The name of the French naturalist Cuvier is eminently worthy of honour. He possessed a noble intellect, and devoted the whole of his

time, from childhood, to mental improvement. To him the earth was a revelation of the infinite wisdom of the Creator: he perused it, and gave the wonderful results to the world. He was the son of a regimental officer in the French service. He was a delicate child, but possessed remarkable intellectual vigour, and could read fluently when only four years old. His mother stimulated his passion for reading, and judiciously selected his books; and he acquired in childhood an accurate and extensive historical knowledge. Madame Cuvier was pious, and he was accustomed to pray and to repeat passages of Scripture daily at her side, and to converse with her on religious subjects. She was a lover of nature, and used to accompany him to and from school and to point out the interesting natural objects they met, and to excite in him a taste for the study of the works of God. He spent his leisure in gaining useful knowledge, seldom indulging in recreation,—except for his health, at the command of his mother. He was a great reader, and was able,

at a very early age, to appreciate learned and substantial works. The writings of Buffon and Gesner strengthened his taste for natural history, and at the age of twelve he had read so many works on the subject, and acquainted himself so thoroughly with the species and habits of the animal kingdom, that he would have compared favourably with many professors of science. At the age of fourteen, he formed a society of intelligent lads for the purpose of discussing science, literature and philosophy. He earned a reputation for erudition, and the genius thus early developed was soon rewarded. Duke Charles of Wurtemberg sent for him, and, greatly delighted with the high order of his abilities and scholarship, became his patron, and sent him to the University of Stuttgard. Here he distinguished himself as a student, and, during his spare hours, gathered many of those facts and illustrations that formed the basis of the productions for which he was famous.

The life of Cuvier was highly successful,

and he laid the foundation of his success by sacrificing the frivolities of youth and devoting the time to the cultivation of his mind. He was made Chancellor of State by Napoleon, and created baron by Louis XVIII. His scientific works are of permanent value, and his amiable, affectionate disposition was in keeping with his genius.

George Stephenson was emphatically one of nature's noblemen. He was born in a colliery village, near Newcastle-on-Tyne. His father was very poor, and fired a pumping-engine in the colliery. He was the second of six children, none of whom were sent to school. He helped maintain himself in his childhood by herding cows, closing the gates after the coal-wagons had passed at night, driving the gin-horse, and like occupations. He was a sober, steady, hard-working lad, and was employed on the engine with his father, as an assistant fireman, and subsequently as a plugman. The machinery excited his curiosity: he acquainted himself with its construction; his mechanical

genius became restless, and he aspired to be an engineer. He desired to know about the engines of Watt and Bolton; he saw the necessity of book-knowledge, and at the age of eighteen began to learn to read. He at first attended a night-school kept by a poor village teacher, and subsequently took lessons of a Scotch dominie of mathematical reputation. He used to work at his problems during his spare moments at the engine, and ere long excelled his master in the use of figures. He was next employed as a brakeman, and received liberal wages. He occupied his leisure in studying mechanics, making inventions, and modelling experimental engines. Steadily rising, he was appointed to superintend the working of one of Watt and Bolton's engines, near Montrose, Scotland. During his absence his aged father lost his eyesight by an accident, and, on his return to England, George paid his father's debts, and provided for his parents a comfortable home, and supported them out of his earnings.

He made many improvements in engineering apparatus, and was appointed engine-wright of Killingworth colliery; and the construction of a locomotive of superior power began to be his study and day-dream. He felt that the engines of the day were practically failures; he declared his ability to produce one of superior advantages, and was authorized by Lord Ravensworth to carry out his plan. He constructed a locomotive which was a great improvement, and, having invented the steam-blast, he constructed another which was a perfect success. Thereafter George Stephenson was a man of note. He was employed as a constructor of railways, and as an engineer, at large salaries; he established a locomotive-manufactory; he superintended the construction of some of the most important railway connections in England; he was the hero of railroad jubilees, at which the great statesmen of the times were present; he was sent for by Leopold, King of the Belgians, who conferred with him in regard to the formation of railway-lines in

his kingdom; he was made a Belgian knight, and received the offer of knighthood from Sir Robert Peel. The railways of the present time would probably girdle the earth several times; and George Stephenson's works are his noblest monument, and will carry his name into all lands.

Mr. Stephenson in his latter years was assisted in his business by his son Robert, a mechanical genius and an accomplished young man. The manner in which he procured for him an education he thus describes in a speech at Newcastle: "In the earlier period of my career, when Robert was a little boy, I saw how deficient I was in education; and I made up my mind that he should not labour under the same defect, but that I would put him to school and give him a liberal training. I was, however, a poor man; and how do you think I managed? I betook myself to mending my neighbours' clocks and watches at night, after my daily labour was done; and thus I procured the means of educating my son."

Mr. Stephenson despised show, foppery and fashion, and considered any thing of that nature derogatory to a young man. To an elegantly-dressed youth he one day said, "You will, I hope, Mr. ——, excuse me; I am a plain-spoken person, and am sorry to see a nice-looking and rather clever young man like you disfigured with that fine-patterned waistcoat and all these chains and fang-dangs. If I, sir, had bothered my head with such things at your age, I would not have been where I am now."

William Cobbett rose from extreme poverty to distinction, and became a member of the British Parliament, and made the English aristocracy tremble at his influence. The secret of this bold and wonderful man's success may be inferred from the fact that in a period of something more than forty years he published fifty volumes of his writings and edited ninety volumes of his political papers. The influence of a man making such tremendous struggles and sacrifices could not be otherwise

than felt. Opinions differ as to the motives that actuated Cobbett, but his industry affords a strong example of what a man of unwavering resolution may accomplish; and the results of his labours justified the eulogy of Ebenezer Elliot:—

> "Dead oak, thou livest!
> Thy smitten hands,
> The thunder of thy brow,
> Speak with strange tongues in many lands,
> And tyrants hear thee now."

All have read of the mighty names that impart so many historic associations to the solemn vaults of Westminster Abbey of London, of St. Peter's at Rome, and of the Pantheon and of Nôtre Dame of Paris. Turn we to a more humble spot. We stand in Bunhill Fields. The shadows of the old chapel of Wesley lengthen in the declining sun. In the rear of the ancestral and shadowy edifice sleeps the great reformer Wesley. How do the names of proud cardinals and stately archbishops lose their dignity, and seem like the hollow echoes of departed pride, at the mention of that hal-

lowed name! Wesley!—who stemmed the current of persecution and the fury of mobs, who made the fields his rostrum and the broad heaven the arch of his church, that he might dispense the gospel among the poor. The grave of Susannah Wesley is here, more worthy of honour than that of the mother of princes. Here repose Charles Wesley and Dr. Watts. Wesley and Watts! whose songs are among the most priceless legacies ever bequeathed to the world,—songs that ever fall upon the ear of God, sung by the labourer during the hours of the day, ascending from numerous Christian assemblies each eve, and swelling a great diapason each Sabbath from the universal church. There sleeps Bunyan, whose chart has led many a wanderer to the celestial city, and whose crown of rejoicing gathers new stars with the advancing years. Adam Clarke, Dr. Owen, Richard Watson, George Burder, and Nathaniel Mather mingle their dust in the great evangelical brotherhood of these holy Fields. All around, the eye rests on the tomb-

stones of humble men who became powerful exponents of the truth of God,—men whose expectations and inheritance were not earthly. A reverential awe creeps over us as we linger here: we feel that we stand among the elements of a glorious resurrection, and anticipate the day when the trumpet shall sound and the dead, small and great, shall stand before God. What emblazoned abbey or stately cathedral holds dust more precious and honoured? These were not only nature's noblemen, but the princes of God's spiritual kingdom that will forever endure.

V.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

CARDINAL RICHELIEU—WHITEFIELD—THOMAS WALSH—COWPER—JONATHAN EDWARDS—AARON BURR.

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CARDINAL RICHELIEU — WHITEFIELD — THOMAS WALSH — COWPER — JONATHAN EDWARDS — AARON BURR.

CARDINAL RICHELIEU, at the close of his life, acknowledged that he had been drawn into many irregularities by State policy, and that, to silence the reproaches of his conscience concerning them, he had been tempted to disbelieve in God and in a future state. "But so strong was the idea of God in his soul, so clear the impression of him upon nature, so unanimous the consent of mankind, and so powerful the conviction of his own conscience, that he could not avoid the necessity

of admitting a Supreme Being and a future state; and he wished to live as one that must die, and to die as one that must live forever." A person once called upon him, and, finding him in dejection, asked him why he was so sad.

"The soul," replied Richelieu, "is a serious thing: it must either be sad here for a moment, or be sad forever."

Young reader, before every worldly consideration your soul demands your serious attention. Eternity alone can estimate its value, and eternity alone can tell the momentous issues that hang on each rapidly-passing moment, on each unreturning day and month and year. Go to the city of the dead, and on many stones you will find your own age chiselled; and they who sleep beneath were, perhaps, cut off with as bright anticipations of worldly happiness and utility as you yourself possess. But the grass rustles above their remains, their state in eternity is fixed, and solemn indeed is the *memento mori* of their tombs. Nothing is enduring that is not

spiritual. Destiny lies in the soul. That soul must be renewed by the Holy Spirit, or it can have no fellowship with God, no interest in heaven. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Says some thoughtful reader, "What is this new birth? To me the subject is veiled in mystery."

It is being made sensible of the presence of God in the soul; it is being endowed with spiritual senses; it is being brought into communion with the heavenly world and made acquainted with heavenly joys through the love of a risen Redeemer; it is being filled with a sense of the love of God, conforming the soul to those holy dispositions that prepare it for a heavenly abode, and transforming man from a carnal to a spiritual being.

Says Whitefield of his earliest spiritual blessings, "But, oh, with what joy—joy unspeakable, even joy that was full and big with glory

—was my soul filled when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God, and a full assurance of faith, broke in upon my disconsolate soul! Surely it was the day of my espousal,—a day to be had in everlasting remembrance. At first my joys were like a spring-tide, and, as it were, overflowed the banks. Go where I would, I could not avoid singing psalms almost aloud. Afterwards they became more settled, and, blessed be God, saving a few casual intervals, have abode and increased in my soul ever since." After a period of growth in grace, he thus speaks of his spiritual exaltation:—"I have a garden near at hand, where I go particularly to meet and talk with my God at the cool of every day. I often sit in silence, offering my soul as so much clay, to be stamped just as my heavenly potter pleases; and, while I am musing, I am often filled, as it were, with the fulness of God. I am frequently at Calvary, and frequently on Mount Tabor, but always assured of my Lord's everlasting love." "Our

dear Lord sweetly fills me with his presence. My heaven is begun indeed." Says Thomas Walsh—Wesley's most distinguished and erudite coadjutor in Ireland—of his first spiritual enjoyments, "And now I felt of a truth that faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. God and the things of the invisible world, of which I had only heard before by the hearing of the ear, appeared now in their true light, as substantial realities. Faith gave me to see a reconciled God and an all-sufficient Saviour. The kingdom of God was within me. I walked and talked with God all the day long; whatsoever I believed to be his will I did with my whole heart. I could unfeignedly love them that hated me, and pray for them that despitefully used and persecuted me. The commandments of God were my delight. I not only rejoiced evermore, but prayed without ceasing, and in every thing gave thanks; whether I ate, or drank, or whatever I did, it was in the name of the Lord Jesus and to the glory of God."

Sings Cowper, his soul glowing with rapture at the dawning of a spiritual day,—

"Author and Guardian of my life,
Sweet source of light divine,
And—all harmonious names in one—
My Saviour, thou art mine!

"What thanks I owe thee, and what love,
A boundless, endless store,
Shall echo through the realms above
When time shall be no more."

"But what," asks the inquirer, "is essential to his glorious renewal?"

First, you must firmly resolve to forsake sin and devote your life to God. Secondly, you must believe in Jesus. You must believe that for you he became a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" that for you he bore to the uttermost the cruelty of the world he came to bless and to save; that for you he agonized in Gethsemane and shed his blood on Calvary. You must believe his promises as though he spake them in your ears. You must come unto him as though you really heard him saying, "Come unto me, all ye that

labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Thirdly, you must look for salvation through his merits, you must cast yourself on his mercy, and commit your soul into his hands for time and eternity. Allow no consideration, however plausible, to prevent you from coming directly to Christ. Waste not time in seeking *conviction*. Although great compunction and prolonged conflict have characterized the religious experiences of many eminent Christians, a calmer and more deliberate frame of mind often precedes conversion. "To-day, if you will hear his voice," is the spirit of the Scriptures; and the scriptural illustrations of conversion point to an immediate belief in Christ. Nor must you doubt the willingness of the Saviour to receive you, though crushed with a sense of the magnitude of your sin. "To the uttermost" is the language of revelation. "Though your sins be scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come. And

whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

The early religious life of Jonathan Edwards presents to the reader an instructive view of the work of grace in the soul, and is, perhaps, consonant with a large number of Christian experiences. He was often thoughtful concerning religion during his boyhood, and was twice especially awakened to the worth of his soul and the necessity of an interest in the Saviour. In one of these periods of concern, he used to pray several times a day, and frequently held prayer-meetings with his companions in the woods; and, although he does not date his conversion from this time, he took much delight in the performance of religious duties. A deeper and more permanent interest fixed itself upon his mind as he advanced towards manhood, and he resolved to give up the world for Christ and to make the seeking of salvation the business of his life.

"My concern," he says, "continued and prevailed with many exercising thoughts and

inward struggles; and yet it never seemed proper to express that concern by the name of terror."

This fixed purpose to seek an interest in Christ was blessed.

Jonathan Edwards is regarded as one of New England's choicest ministers. Hallowed memories cluster around the old burying-ground at Princeton, where rest the remains of the early presidents of the New Jersey College. There, near each other, repose Jonathan Edwards and his son-in law, President Burr, the husband of the beautiful and devout Esther.

At their feet is an obelisk, that speaks not of divinity or of piety, but of political position and of fame. It marks the grave of Aaron Burr, a grandson of Jonathan Edwards, a man of pleasure and of the world, who rejected the faith of his fathers for the ruinous philosophy of Chesterfield. Cast upon the world an orphan, he early discovered unusual abilities, and at the age of thirteen was a college junior. An extensive revival of religion blessed the

college of which he was a student, and he was awakened to a sense of the value of his soul. He succeeded partially in stifling his powerful sense of duty; but an unrest remained: the Holy Spirit, though baffled, mercifully lingered. After his collegiate course, he went to an old friend of his father, an estimable and learned divine, to study theology, and to consider the things relating to his spiritual welfare. Here, after a period of speculative reasoning and religious disputation, in which he probably found a false philosophy more congenial to his pride and unbridled aspirations than the gospel, he deliberately rejected not only the claims of the Holy Spirit upon him personally, but Christianity itself. The world now opened its temptations, its pleasures, its allurements to temporal glory. He entered the army; he rose to military honours. He left the army at the close of the American Revolution, and settled in New York. His military distinction, his personal beauty, his courtly manners, his wit, his learning and his ancestry

made him a marked man and prominent in society. He became a lawyer and a politician. Ambition fired his soul; he aspired to be chief magistrate of the nation; he became a national Senator, and then Vice-President of the Republic. But he had a rival, an eminent man, an avowed political enemy, whose penetration had pierced his very soul and there discovered dark designs. He could not brook the fearful denunciations that his rival hurled against him: he challenged him to mortal combat; he murdered him! Public opinion rose against the murderer and branded him with the mark of Cain; and he was no longer the hero of popular applause, but an outcast from society. He was still restless for power, and a dark project for advancement filled his imagination. He would wrest Mexico from Spain; he would build up a southwestern empire; he himself should wield the sceptre; he would, perhaps, enlarge his domain by acquisition or conquest from the Federal Union. He gathered an army of reckless, adventurous men; he was arrested for

high treason; the bubble burst, and his cherished scheme covered him with ignominy instead of the fame of a conqueror. He became an exile; he visited England, Sweden, France. England expelled him from her shores; France held him under surveillance, and the destitution of a common beggar added to his burden of misery. The popular wrath of his native country subsiding, he returned to New York, and passed an old age of misery, folly and sin. "Gracious God! for what a fate am I reserved!" he bitterly exclaimed, as domestic calamities added to his numberless woes. And the pitiable old man died impenitent,—

"With vanish'd hopes and happy smiles
All lost for evermore,—
Like ships that sail'd for sunny isles
But never came to shore."

That man was Aaron Burr. Wide indeed is the contrast between him and his distinguished ancestor,—between the wily and accomplished infidel and the learned and zealous divine. The story has its own instructive moral.

VI.

THE EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE.

COWPER—MRS. EDWARDS—RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN SICKNESS—IN TRIAL—AT THE HOUR OF DEATH.

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OUR youth are exposed to the temptation of skepticism. Some young persons are constitutionally skeptical, and many, anxious to know the truth and to practise it, are perplexed with the arguments of skeptical writers or of skeptical companions. "There is a great deal of infidelity in young people," said Dr. Gordon to his pastor, on his death-bed, "and you have many of them about you. Tell them from me that I have read a great many skeptical books, ancient and modern, of all sorts.

It is all fallacious: they are very plausible, but can give no consolation in a dying hour."

The mind that becomes unsettled by the errors of speculative infidelity is in a fearful state. God is the source of true wisdom, of human happiness and hope; and he who loses his confidence in God makes his life aimless and hopeless. There is danger that he will adopt the sentiment of the fallen angel in Milton,—

"Evil, be thou my good."

Said one to Wesley,—

"I know there is a God, and I believe him to be the soul of all. But further than this I know not; all is dark; my thought is lost. Whence I came I know not, nor what nor why I am, nor whither I am going. But this I know:—I am unhappy; I am weary of life; I wish it were at an end."

David Hume wrote as follows:—

"When I look abroad, I foresee on every side dispute, contradiction, anger, calumny and detraction. When I turn my eye inward,

I find nothing but doubt and ignorance. All the world conspires to oppose and contradict me; though such is my weakness that I feel all my opinions loosen and fall of themselves when unsupported by the approbation of others. . . .

"The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections of human reason has so wrought upon and heated my brain that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another. Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favour shall I court, and whose anger must I dread? What beings surround me? . . . I am confounded with all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness, and utterly deprived of the use of every faculty and member."

"No honest man," says Dr. Johnson, "could

be a Deist; for no one could be so after a careful examination of the proofs of Christianity." "A little philosophy," says Lord Bacon, "inclineth man to atheism; but depth of philosophy bringeth men's minds back to religion." It is true that there are certain teachings of nature and of philosophy, certain data of history and developments of science, that strongly evidence the truth of Christianity. But they are secondary evidences. The most satisfactory evidence of Christianity is actual religious experience. External evidences may convince us of the credibility of religion and of our need of spiritual renovation; but, without an experimental knowledge of the truth, God will be to us merely the marvellous Being that nature reveals. The divine unction, the heavenly peace and rapturous love, the strong faith, and all the holy and heavenly dispositions that centre in the soul enlightened by the Holy Spirit, find no medium to our spiritual natures through the revelations of philosophy, but come through the channels opened by the

humiliation and passion of the Redeemer of mankind. Through the gospel of Jesus, and through that only, can the alienated affections of man be borne back to the bosom of the Father, and the faith of man in religion be established. The Saviour came not to demand of the world to receive religion on the evidence of philosophy, but upon the evidence of experience,—an experience that should reveal God to the soul. "My doctrine," he said, "is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John vii. 16, 17.) If we follow the precepts of the gospel humbly and sincerely, we shall be blessed with a sense of God's presence in our souls, we shall have rapturous communion with him, our prayers will be answered, and that exalted love for God and for spiritual things that springs up within us will destroy the power of temptation, expand the soul, purify the heart, fulfil the moral law, and crown the close of life with

that triumphant assurance of eternal happiness that destroys the terror of death.*

A single prayer that finds acceptance with God and is answered by the descent of the Holy Spirit, opening sweet communion with heaven and filling the soul with a sense of divine love, is a more satisfactory proof of the reality of religion than the profoundest researches of philosophy. He whose mind is filled with a sense of God's love doubts not the existence of God, for the evidence is within him; nor does he doubt the divinity of the Saviour, for by him he approached the Almighty's throne; nor does he doubt the truth of the gospel, for its promises and prophecies are fulfilled in him, and no human foresight could have invented a plan that would have brought him into sensible communion with

* He that has not felt this divine presence in his soul has no correct idea of religion; and it is an interesting fact that the arguments of the skeptic against religion, while claiming great erudition, treat of a subject of whose main evidence he has no intelligent conception.

God; nor does he doubt the immortality of the soul: he already tastes the joys of heaven and lives in the dawn of eternal day. Were the Scriptures silent concerning immortality, he might commit his own spirit by faith into the keeping of God, and safely believe that God would receive him to his bosom and to everlasting rest.

During his early religious enjoyments, Cowper sings,—

"How blest thy creature is, O God,
When with a single eye
He views the lustre of thy word,
The day-spring from on high!

"Through all the storms that veil the skies
And frown on earthly things,
The Sun of righteousness he eyes,
With healing on his wings.

"Struck by that light, the human heart,
A barren soil no more,
Sends the sweet smell of grace abroad,
Where serpents lurk'd before.

"The soul, a dreary province once
Of Satan's dark domain,
Feels a new empire form'd within,
And owns a heavenly reign.

"The glorious orb, whose golden beams
The fruitful year control,
Since first, obedient to thy word,
He started from the goal,

"Has cheer'd the nations with the joys
His orient beams impart;
But, Jesus, 'tis thy light alone
Can shine upon the heart."

Says Mrs. Sarah Edwards of a season of religious exaltation, "I never before, for so long a time together, enjoyed so much of the light and rest and sweetness of heaven in my soul. The greater part of the night I lay awake, sometimes asleep, and sometimes between sleeping and waking. But all night I continued in a constant, clear and lively sense of the heavenly sweetness of Christ's excellent and transcendent love, of his nearness to me and of my dearness to him, with an inexpressibly sweet calmness of soul in an entire rest in him. I seemed to myself to perceive a glow of divine love come down from Christ in heaven, into my heart, in a constant stream, like a stream or ray of sweet light. At the

same time, my heart and soul all flowed out in love to Christ, so that there seemed to be a constant flowing and reflowing of heavenly and divine love from Christ, and these bright, sweet beams of the love of Christ like the motes swimming in the beams of the sun, or the streams of his light which come in at the window. Thus my soul remained in a kind of heavenly elysium. So far as I am capable of making a comparison, I think that what I felt each minute, during the continuance of the whole time, was worth more than all the outward comfort and pleasure which I had enjoyed in my whole life put together. It was a pure delight, which fed and satisfied the soul. It was pleasure without the least sting or any interruption. It was sweetness which my soul was lost in."

Dr. Chalmers, in treating of the experimental evidence of Christianity as taught in the Scriptures, says, "But the truth is that this peculiar method bears upon itself another impress of the divinity; and that not merely because light hath been made to arise in the

mind by a way altogether distinct from any of the processes of human teaching, but also in the very way that is specified and laid down in the book itself. Being 'renewed in knowledge,' being 'called out of darkness into marvellous light,' having the eyes 'opened to behold,' having the 'secrets of the heart made manifest,' being struck with the conviction of inward want and worthlessness on the one hand, and also, on the other, with the efficiency of the proposed application,—these all point to a great event at the outset of a man's real and decided Christianity; and should the event happen to any individual, there is to him a correspondence between the announcement in the book, and what to himself is a most interesting passage in his own history, which might serve still more to evince the powerful and the presiding intelligence by which it is animated. What it affirms is not a something which is within us, but a something which will befall us; not a description of our present state, but the actual prediction or rather fulfilment

of a promise in our future history. The divination, in fact, is heightened into a prophecy. 'He that seeketh findeth:' this, if at length verified upon us and verified in the very peculiar way that we have already explained, will lead us to the view of another coincidence more remarkable than any which we have yet specified. Not a coincidence between the statements of the book and the state of our own moral economy; not a coincidence between the provisions which it offers and the felt necessities of our actual condition; but a coincidence between what is to us a most interesting prophecy or promise, and the living and actual fulfilment of it in our own persons,—a proof most effective individually to ourselves, and which, multiplied as it is in the frequent and unceasing repetitions of it throughout all the countries of Christendom, might furnish a general and enlightened observer with the very strongest materials for the demonstration of the reality of our faith.

"The event which we now suppose to have

taken place in the mental history of the inquirer . . . is in itself a distinct and additional evidence. There is even more in it than another species of accordancy, besides either of these which come under the two former heads of this argument,*—not an accordancy between what the Bible says we are and what we discern ourselves to be, not an accordancy between what the Bible offers as a remedy and what we feel that we require, but an accordancy between what the Bible says will happen to its disciples, and what they experience in themselves to happen actually. But, over and above this, we behold, in this great spiritual transaction, the characters not merely of the divine prescience, but of the divine agency. For it comes as the fulfilment of a promise, and in answer to prayer, and so gives the irresistible conviction that the power and the will and the knowledge and the faithfulness of the living God are all concerned in it. It bears every mark of a special

* See Chalmers's "Evidences of Christianity."

interposition on the part of Him who commands 'the light to shine out of darkness,' who hath promised to draw near unto those who draw near unto him, and tells the sinner who awakens at his call that 'Christ shall give him light.' . . .

"But he who is the subject of this visitation may be altogether unable to philosophize on the grounds of that conviction in which it is issued, or on the steps by which he has been led to it. The conviction, however, is not the less clear or warrantable on that account. He who has thus been made to see, sees upon evidence as sound as to himself it is satisfactory; and could we by any means be made to know what passes in the minds of others as intimately as we know and feel what passes in our own minds, we might from the history of every manifestation gather a strong argument of a peculiar but very conclusive kind, for the truth of Christianity. Such a general observation as this, however, is not very practicable; and therefore it is the more

fortunate that this evidence, which it is so difficult to collect from the history of others, gathers in brightness every day along the line of the individual history of each real Christian. And this experimental evidence is perpetually growing. There is not merely an agreement between the declarations of the book and his own experience in the great event that marks and that constitutes, in fact, the outset of that new moral career upon which he has entered; but there is a sustained agreement between its declarations and the evolutions of his mental and spiritual history in all time coming. . . . And so it is that even the unlettered peasant may receive an impression of the truth of this book from the truth of its manifold agreements with his own intimate experience. He may recognize throughout its pages, not merely the shrewd discernment of what he is, but the prophetic discernment of what he will be along the successive stages of his preparation for heaven. And, with every new experience of the way in

which its descriptions tally with the details of his own history,—as in the account, for example, that it gives of the exercises of the spirit, whether under the afflictions of life or the assaults of temptation, or in the fulfilments of prayer, or in the facilities that open up for a still more prosperous cultivation of the heart, along the path of an advancing excellence, or in the light which it casts over the ways and the arrangements of Providence in the world. There redounds from all these, and from many more which cannot be specified, the glory of an increasing evidence for the truth of that volume whose insight not only reaches to the penetration of the human character, but lays open the secrets of the dark places that lie in the womb of futurity. This is truly an accumulating evidence. It brightens with every new fulfilment and every new step on the journey of a Christian's life; and, amid the incredulity and derision of those who have no sympathy either with his convictions or his hopes, still we hold that the faith thus origin-

ated and thus sustained is the faith not of fanaticism, but of sound philosophy; that his experimental Christianity rests, in fact, on a basis as firm as experimental science; that there is neither delusion in the growing lustre of his convictions through life, nor delusion in the concluding triumphs and ecstasy of his death-bed."

Let us illustrate this elaborate idea of Chalmers. Take, for example, the fulfilment of God's prophecies concerning the comfort and support he will afford his afflicted children.

"Truly," wrote Samuel Pearce, during protracted illness, "I have proved that God is faithful; and most cheerfully would I take double the affliction for one-half the joy and sweetness that have attended it."

"I am extremely weak," he wrote to Dr. Ryland; "and now that warm weather which I came into Devon to seek I dread as much as the cold, because it excites the fever. I am happy, however, in the Lord. I have not a wish to live or die, but as he pleases."

"The sick-bed is a Bethel to me," he said to a friend: "it is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven. I can scarcely express the pleasures that I have enjoyed in this affliction. It scarcely can be called an affliction, it is so counterbalanced with joy."

"As a man who during the day descends into a deep pit sees the friendly stars of heaven, invisible to others," wrote Rev. Henry Möwes during a lingering indisposition following a period of terrible physical distress, "so, when God allowed me to fall into the depths of suffering and woe, I saw, through the dense darkness around me, the bright star of the Father's eternal mercy in Christ our Saviour shining over me. And this star was my polar star,—never setting, but ever growing brighter. . . . Oh, it is a high and holy joy to be with our Saviour even in Gethsemane,—to bear with him a crown of thorns, and in such an hour, strengthened by him, to say, 'The disciple is not above his Master.' . .

To follow him in bright days, and to sun ourselves in his love and glory, is sweet indeed; but in days of sorrow to see him near, to prove his faithfulness, is a precious addition to the happiness of communion with him. There the bond is drawn yet nearer, there the heart presses yet closer to him, there the soul lays herself down at his feet with fuller love and trust."

Dr. Watts expresses his feelings during a painful illness in the following beautiful and characteristic lines:—

"Yet, gracious God, amidst these storms of nature
Thine eyes behold a sweet and sacred calm
Reign through the realms of conscience. All within
Lies peaceful, all composed. 'Tis wondrous grace
Keeps off thy terrors from this humble bosom,
Though stain'd with sins and follies, yet serene
In penitential peace and cheerful hope,
Sprinkled and guarded with atoning blood.
Thy vital smiles, amidst this desolation,
Break out in happy moments with bright radiance,
Cleaving the gloom; the fair celestial light
Softens and gilds the horrors of the storm,
And richest cordials to the heart conveys.

"Oh, glorious solace of immense distress!
A conscience and a God. A friend at home,

And better friend on high. This is my rock
Against infernal arrows. Rise, my soul;
Put on thy courage! here's the living spring
Of joys divinely sweet and ever new,
A peaceful conscience, and a smiling heaven."

"I had before prayed with much uneasiness," wrote the German poet Klopstock at the decease of his amiable and beloved Christian wife. "I could now pray quite differently. I entreated perfect submission. My soul hung on God. I was refreshed. I was comforted and prepared for the stroke that was already near, —nearer than I thought. I believed that she would yet live some hours,—that was my only hope,—and that, according to her wish, expressed not long before I left her, I might once more be permitted to pray with her. But how often are our thoughts not as God's thoughts! I said, soon after her death, 'She is not far from me: we are both in the hand of the Almighty.'

"After some time, I wished to see what I had just before called my Meta. They pre-

vented me. I said to one of our friends, 'Then I will forbear. *She will rise again.*'

"The second night came the blessing of her death. Till then I had considered it only a trial. The blessing of such a death in its full power came on me. I passed above an hour in silent rapture. Only once in my life did I ever feel any thing similar,—when, in my youth, I thought myself dying; but the moments of my expected departure then were somewhat different. My soul was raised with gratitude and joy; but that sweet silence was not in it. The highest degree of peace with which I am acquainted was in my soul. This state began with my recollecting that her Accomplisher and my Advocate said, 'He who loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.'

"It is impossible to describe all the blessings of that hour. I was never before with such certainty convinced of my salvation."

Let us go to the bed of death, to that outer court of the palace of the Great King, where the glory of heaven is so frequently revealed.

Stephen beheld God's glory and died. The dying saint frequently beholds such visions: it is promised that his faith shall triumph in death.

"The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made;
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home;
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new."

"The celestial city," said Payson, "is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me,—its sounds strike upon my ears."

"Christ"—"angels"—"beautiful"—"magnificent"—"delightful," was the language of the expiring Dr. Hope.

"Home, home!" said Normand Smith. "I see the New Jerusalem. They praise Him, they praise Him."

"Now farewell, world," said Rev. Mr. Holland, "welcome heaven; the Day-Star from on high has visited my heart. Oh, speak it when I am gone, and preach it at my funeral. God dealeth familiarly with

man. I feel his mercy. I see his majesty. Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell; but I see things that are unutterable."

"I have been," said Walker of Truro, "upon the wings of cherubim. Heaven has in a manner been opened to me. I shall soon be there."

"Do you see," said Edmund Auger, "that blessed assembly who await my arrival? Do you hear that sweet music, with which those holy men invite me, that I may henceforth be a partaker of their happiness? How delightful it is to be in the society of blessed spirits! Let us go. We must go. Let me go!"

"You seem to enjoy foretastes of heaven," said one to H. S. Golding. "Oh, this is no longer a foretaste," was the joyful assent: "this is heaven! I not only feel the climate, but I breathe the ambrosial air, of heaven, and shall soon enjoy the company."

"I breathe the air of heaven," said Dr. Stephen Gano. "My soul is filled with God

and Christ. Come — Lord Jesus — come — quickly."

We cannot, perhaps, better close this chapter than by quoting the antithesis of Cowper between a poor and aged but pious peasant and Voltaire:

"She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Of little understanding and no wit,
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew,—
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

"O happy peasant! O unhappy bard!--
His the mere tinsel, her's the rich reward.
He, praised perhaps for ages yet to come;
She, never heard of half a mile from home;
He lost in errors, his vain heart prefers;
She, safe in the simplicity of her's."

VII.

AN IMPEDIMENT TO FAITH.

AN EXPERIENCE.

VII.

AN IMPEDIMENT TO FAITH.

"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

AN EXPERIENCE.

THE seeker after religion sometimes thinks that mental suffering is necessary to commend him to the favour of God. He feels that he is a sinner, and that he needs a Saviour; but he has none of that anguish of mind of which he has heard in accounts of remarkable conversions, a period of which he supposes must precede acceptance with God. Under this impression he spends weeks, perhaps months, seeking the terrors of conviction,—performing a sort of penance by which he expects to win, ultimately, the divine favour. The error is discouraging and unscriptural. The Scriptures

afford no incident of long and terrible conviction. It required but little conviction for the Israelites to look to the brazen serpent and be healed. Three thousand were convicted and converted on the day of Pentecost. The eunuch was convicted and converted during the preaching of Philip. Repent and believe,—turn from your sins and cast yourself on the mercy of God,—is the direction of the gospel. "Now is the accepted time." God wants repentance and faith, not terror of mind. "I want religion," said a penitent: "I have been praying six weeks." "For what have you been praying?" asked a clergyman. "For conviction," was the reply. "Do you not feel that you are a sinner?" "Yes, an unworthy sinner." "Then no more seek conviction, but cast yourself at once on the mercy of God." The penitent was soon rejoicing in hope. The Holy Spirit sometimes shows the soul all its terrible depravity, and the full extent of its danger, and overwhelms it with the appalling truths; but it does not lead all persons to God in the same

way. It leads the willing, longing soul more gently than the soul that resists its influence.

Again: the young convert who has experienced no remarkable terrors of mind is often troubled in regard to the genuineness of his conversion, on hearing of accounts of deep conviction. Such trials are alike unwise and unscriptural. If he has the love of God in his heart, he is truly converted. To yield to this temptation of distrusting God is ungrateful and sinful. God explicitly enjoins a childlike confidence of his children. If God leads us to him by the subduing influences of Calvary, instead of by the terrors of Sinai, we should be grateful rather than distrustful.

Among the papers of Rev. John Newton is an account of the religious experience of an excellent clergyman, which is an instance of that quiet kind of conversion of which but little is said or written.

He had been long thoughtful on religious subjects, though speculative, when the death of a very dear friend led him frequently to the

throne of grace, and turned his thoughts constantly to heavenly things. He had a strong desire to meet that friend in heaven; and this led him to the reading of those religious works that favoured the idea of the future reunion of friends. His religious readings and researches led him to contemplate the character of God. He was suddenly struck and delighted with its loveliness; it subdued his heart to penitence; he gave himself up to God, and experienced immediately the joys of the believer. Of this sudden and interesting change he says,—

"I saw so clearly God's supreme worthiness of all my love and obedience, that my mind was carried by a sweet and irresistible force to love him with sincerity, and my heart, broken at the sight, abhorred its past ingratitude. I instantly conceived the purpose of a total reform in my conduct, of a universal attention to all his commandments, and to take them for my rule of life thenceforth, and without any exception. This appeared to me not only perfectly just and right, but easy also, and pleasant. I

seemed to myself to have been hitherto the blindest and most ungrateful of creatures, who had never formed to myself such views of God before, who had neither loved nor obeyed him.

"From that memorable day my condition became widely different, and my course of life also. I had acquired new ideas of God, of myself, of the vanity of earthly things, and of the inestimable value of grace and divine communion. I was translated as it were into a new world. Christ lived in me, though until then I had not known him, and thus I became a new creature. My ideas now of the infinite excellence and loveliness of God were lively and perspicuous. Such also were my apprehensions of my duty towards him, of my own excessive ingratitude and disobedience, and of God's powerful and unmerited grace, by which he had quickened me. Fears of divine wrath I had none; no dread of punishment. That I deserved it, indeed, and was utterly unworthy of his favour, I saw plainly; notwithstanding which I never for a moment supposed myself

an object of divine wrath, or feared lest I should suffer the punishment that I had deserved. It was a subject on which anxiety, fear, doubt, had no place in me. A lively perception of the divine glory and beauty, an unspeakable sense of his gracious presence, an experimental acquaintance with the delight that belongs to an effectual love to him,—these things secured me from all such terrors, and filled me with exceeding joy. In such a state of mind I could not doubt one moment concerning my admittance to the divine favour and communion, for I had a sensible experience of both,—knowing myself, however, at the same time unworthy of them, and unable to account for the gift of them to me, otherwise than in virtue of the blood and spirit of Christ alone."

The subsequent life of the convert showed that his was a case of true conversion. Yet it was preceded by no remarkable distress of mind, but simply by contemplations that revealed to him the loveliness of the character of God, and the duty of loving and serving a

Being so beneficent. To those troubled in regard to conviction, the lesson is useful and instructive.

But because we may receive the witness of the Spirit that we are born of God without being overwhelmed with the terrors of conviction, let no one imagine that repentance is a light thing. "Repentance," says Jeremy Taylor, in his *Holy Living and Dying*, "of all things in the world makes the greatest change: it changes things in heaven and earth, for it changes the whole man from sin to grace, from vicious habits to holy customs, from unchaste bodies to angelical souls, from swine to philosophers, from drunkenness to sober counsels; and God himself, with whom is no variableness or shadow of change, is pleased, by descending to our weak understandings, to say that he changes also upon man's repentance; that he alters his decrees, revokes his sentence, cancels the bills of accusation, throws the records of shame and sorrow from the court of heaven, and lifts up the sinner from the grave to life, from his

prison to a throne, from hell and the guilt of eternal torture to heaven, and to a title to never-ceasing felicities."

The new birth is an event in which the God of the universe is made manifest to our spiritual discernment, and one over which angels rejoice. It is an event of stupendous moment,—beyond finite conception; our destiny, millions of ages to come, centre in it; joys which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, depend upon it. We may experience it in answer to prayer, when hungering and thirsting for righteousness, or when overwhelmed with conviction; but its transforming power is the same: our hearts are filled with the love of God and our spiritual constitution prepared for a transit to a better world.

Persevere, then, young follower of Christ. Seek higher spiritual attainments, and your faith will be established. You will soon walk in Beulah; you will soon stand on the Delectable Mountains; you will soon walk in Paradise with the redeemed.

VIII.

LIFE IN EARNEST.

SUMMERFIELD.

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SUMMERFIELD.

"HERE he lives who *was* so many years, but lived but seven," was the inscription on the tomb of Similis of Xiphilim. A sadder record might be engraved on many monuments. Sickness, death, or some solemn issue alone arouse many people to a sober estimate of their responsibility to themselves, to the world and to God. We read of those of old who, dying, wished for a truce until morning; and a dying English queen declared she would give all her possessions for a moment of time.

Life is serious, and is passing; the soul is serious, and its destiny lies in the flying hours; our responsibility to the world is serious, and

no regrets in declining life can produce fruits of usefulness in departed years.

The youth does not regard life as it is. He lives as though it was an infinite instead of a brief period. As age creeps on, he realizes the sentiment of Montgomery:—

> "to see
> All nature die, and find myself at ease,
> In youth this seem'd to me an immortality;
> But I have changed now, and feel with trees
> A brotherhood, and in their obsequies
> Think of my own."

Young reader, go to your life-work at once and with resolution. You may die young, but you may accomplish much in a limited period if you yield to your sense of responsibility to God, and make the best use of your faculties; should you live to be old, you can never retrieve the loss if you waste your early years.

> "He who runs it well twice runs the race."

John Summerfield, the young Wesleyan divine, affords an interesting illustration of the power of an earnest life. His parents

were pious, and his father had devoutly wished for a son who should devote himself to the ministry, and whose name should be John. John Summerfield was devoted to the work of the ministry by paternal prayers in his infancy; and, although he became dissipated in youth, and his father's faith was subjected to severe trial, he, at the age of nineteen, turned his attention to the concerns of his soul.

He thus relates his religious experience in a letter:—

"As my father wrote to you some time ago, you have some idea of the change which, by the grace of God, has been effected in me: you know what I was, God knows what I am. If you except family and filial affection, of which I was never devoid, you may fill up the catalogue of my conduct in any way you please. Truly,—

'I the chief of sinners am;
But Jesus died for me.'

Various were the chastisements the Lord laid upon me to bring me to himself,—prisons, dis-

tresses, afflictions, nay, I might add, death itself. This last had the effect: while my body was brought down to the verge of the pit, my mind began to think of God. I vowed a vow unto the Lord: he knows the nature of it: he received it. I was restored to health, and, by the strength of God, I am performing it.

"I began to seek him whom I had before despised; the world was stripped of her charms; I saw with new eyes; Jesus was the only amiable object, while I loathed myself in dust and ashes that I so late to him did turn. However, my cry was incessant

'Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified.'

Long was my struggle for mercy, severe was my agony; often tempted to suicide to rid myself of the pangs of a wounded spirit; but finally the Lord lifted upon me the light of his countenance, and spoke to my heart as with an audible voice, 'I have loved thee with an everlast-

ing love.' Oh, how was I melted! I wept,—but they were tears of joy; I groaned,—but they were unutterable groans. Heaven proclaimed, 'My beloved is mine,' and my heart replied, 'I am his.' Thus I began to serve the Lord. This was October, 1817, now a year and a half ago; but, oh, what has God done since then! Last September I embarked in the same vessel with Jesus,—I began the ministration of the word of life to others. Six months have I wearied this feeble body in the laborious calling; and yet I am not tired. I hope I shall never put off the harness."

Being called to watch with a sick person during his earlier religious experience, he says, "I found my friend no more a man: he was now become an angel. I remained with the beautiful clay all night. Oh that I was landed as safely beyond the stream!"

Mr. Summerfield applied himself laboriously to study, and became a Biblical scholar. He watched his time, that no moment might

be lost. He had a defect in his speech; but his resolution overcame it. Ireland was the first field of his ministerial labours, and the fame of his pulpit eloquence soon filled the country. Multitudes flocked to hear him, and hung on his inspired tongue as on an issue of life or death. Once, having failed to preach satisfactorily to himself, he says, "Oh, the infirmity of man, unwilling to be humbled, dissatisfied if he cannot please himself in serving God!"

A holy ambition and a fiery zeal possessed Summerfield. Of his going to preach on one occasion he says, "I could not help thinking how like a travelling preacher I was then. A boy whom I had hired walked before me with my travelling-bag, like a preacher's portmanteau, and I was hurrying after, to meet immortal souls who were waiting for me. John Wesley rushed on my mind. Oh that I had his spirit, his zeal, his piety! then indeed I should be a burning and a shining light in the world." He speaks of his travelling ninety-six miles and

preaching ten sermons in seven days,—of his travelling three hundred and sixty-two miles and preaching fifty sermons in seven weeks. The following extracts from his journal show his lively religious enjoyments:—

"*Feb.* 28 [1819].—I grew this day in grace and knowledge. The sacred page had new beauties and ideas to my soul. *March* 4.—My mind has been sweetly exercising faith in Jesus this day. *March* 7.—My Jesus was precious to me this morning: my heart was melted down, and he gave me a sweet foretaste of the good things of this day. *March* 8.—I am quite hoarse to-day, after yesterday's exertions; but my Jesus has paid me for all by a sweet sense of his love which I feel upon me. *March* 10.—My mind is truly dejected: for the last two days I have been in Gethsemane. I long for the time of refreshing. Come, my Lord, come quickly. 'I cried unto the Lord: he heard me, and delivered me from all my troubles.' I seldom had such a pouring out of

the divine glory." Again, in a letter, he says of his spiritual desires, "I pant after a full conformity to the mind of Jesus. I feel that I want an abiding witness of the Spirit. I want to arrive at that state when

> 'Not a cloud shall arise
> To darken the skies,
> Or hide for one moment
> My Lord from my eyes.'"

He went to England. As the shores of Ireland receded, he thus bids the scenes of his earlier labours an affecting farewell:—"Farewell, my sweetest friends. Farewell, Ireland, that concealest all that I love dear on earth: yet I give you all up; the cross, but then the crown; I leave a land of friends, I fly to a land of strangers. Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife. It is for Jesus. Farewell! Adieu!"

He preached in England, and rekindled much of the enthusiasm of the Wesleyan fathers. He came to America. Crowds in our principal cities flocked to hear him. But, while at the summit of his popularity, his

health gave way. He rallied, and went to France, but shortly returned to America, where his genius flashed forth in a self-consuming blaze.

Summerfield died at the age of twenty-seven; but at this early age he had accomplished more than most of the men of his times, and, measured by this standard, his life was long. The steps of heaven glow with many feet who heard in his voice the voice of God calling them to repentance; and, though his years were few, his crown of rejoicing must be brilliant among celestial diadems.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, for ever and ever."

IX.

THE MISSION OF SYMPATHY.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY—VINCENT DE PAUL—MRS. UNWIN—KLOPSTOCK.

IX.

THE MISSION OF SYMPATHY.

"I do not remember to have read that ever any charitable person died an evil death."

ST. JEROME.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY—VINCENT DE PAUL—MRS. UNWIN—KLOPSTOCK.

SYMPATHY is a mission. Its rewards are an approving conscience, the love and respect of the world, and the peculiar favour of God.

There are hearts that ache in almost every household; and the aching heart hungers for sympathy. The neglected child that crosses our path, the youth whom the world has flattered and crushed, the man whose hopes have been wrecked, and who feels that he has nothing for

which to live, the aged who have seen the end of what they cherished,—all have unutterable longings for some affectionate heart to share their grief. "Kiss me, Hardy," said the dying Nelson. At that bitter hour even the stern man of battle longed for sympathy.

It is strange that, poor, weak creatures as we are ourselves, we have so little sympathy for others. We are prone to look upon the sorrows of others not as He looked upon them who went about relieving human misery, and who spake to the downcast disciples words of unequalled tenderness, but as the common affairs of life, in which we have no concern and to which we owe no duty. We seem to forget that we are all members of one common family, that we are all subject to like feelings, and that it is as hard for others to suffer as it is for ourselves. As we see the deformed, the beggar, the shabbily-dressed man who has known better days, or any marked by misfortune, we seldom think how sadly we should feel in their situation. We smile at some facetious remark

made about them by a companion, without thinking how our crushed spirit would feel at a smile. We let some trivial thing prevent us from visiting the sick or the needy, but we do not reflect how we should feel, languishing in pain, without the soothing influence of interested and affectionate friends, or passing weary hours uncertain whence the sustenance was to come to save us from perishing. There are comparatively few who, retiring at night amid the comforts of life,

> "Think for a moment on his wretched fate
> Whom friends and fortune quite disown:
> Ill satisfied keen nature's clamorous call,
> Stretch'd on his straw, he lays himself to sleep,
> While, through the ragged roof and chinky wall,
> Chill o'er his slumbers piles the drifty heap:—
> Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
> Where guilt and poor misfortune pine."

Yet who has made us to differ? He who has made our lives pleasant has made the unfortunate pensioners upon our bounty; and we are unworthy of the blessings he has bestowed upon us if we are unwilling to impart them to others.

Our feelings should be so susceptible to misfortune that we cannot passively endure that another should suffer. When the amiable Sir Philip Sidney was dying on the battle-field, an attendant brought him some water. A wounded soldier looked wishfully at the cup. "Bear it to him," said Sir. Philip: "his necessity is greater than mine." Vincent de Paul, the French philanthropist, on passing a row of galley-convicts, found one in the deepest dejection on account of the family he had left dependent on him for support. The heart of Vincent was touched. He offered to take the man's place, and thus procured for him a release. For eight months he worked in the galleys with a chain about his leg; and he bore the marks of his servitude to the close of his life.

It is not the fame of a Howard, a Wilberforce, a Vincent de Paul, or an Isabella Graham, that makes one a true philanthropist. Heaven is full of those who were as noble-hearted as these, but of whom the tablet of

fame reveals nothing. The young man who labours to support and make pleasant the declining years of a poor father, and the girl who, turning her back on the gayeties of youth, lives to solace a feeble mother, are philanthropists in the sight of God, and, however little is known of them here, their names are spoken among the angels. The humble man who, pitying the misfortunes of another, makes him a pleasant home, is as noble in the sight of God as the millionaire who founds an asylum and whose name is chiselled in granite and familiar to the world.

Mrs. Unwin, the friend of Cowper, is a representative of that noble class of persons who derive their happiness from imparting comfort to others. Cowper was insane. Insanity, indeed, calls for commiseration. The darkened mind gropes vaguely for human love; the heavy heart longs for some one in whom to confide. He who brings a smile to the fixed, lined features of such a one sends beams of light where all is chaotic and cheer-

less. The case of Cowper was extremely touching. Innocent and tender-hearted, loving all and beloved by all, desiring the comforts of religion, and clinging to the forms of religious devotion, he lived, looking upon himself as an outcast from God and doomed to eternal misery.

"My love is slain, and by my crime is slain:
Ah! now beneath whose wings shall I repose?"

The delusion lay upon his mind like an incubus; and, except at brief intervals, the lapse of time did not remove it.

"Seasons return'd; but not to him return'd
God and the sweet approach of heavenly day."

The unhappy poet was the care of Mrs. Mary Unwin. He was not her relative: he had entered her house as a boarder, and while there his malady returned. But she knew that he looked up to her as to a mother, and that without her his case would be greatly aggravated; and she willingly consented to become his nurse. Her husband soon after

died; the malady of Cowper became settled; and, from pure sympathy, she devoted to him the whole of her subsequent life. During his long periods of excitement, when for months no smile would enliven his countenance, she watched by him day and night, regardless of her health, ever seeking to impart to him some ray of comfort. And when the sable veil was partially lifted, it was her constant care to make his life flow so smoothly that his mind might be strengthened by the soothing influence. She encouraged poetical composition; for she knew its salutary effects on a mind like his. She chose his subjects; and we are indirectly indebted to her for some of his most beautiful poems. Of her devotion to him in his darker hours he writes, on one occasion, "I walk constantly,—that is to say, Mrs. Unwin and I together; for at such times I keep her constantly employed, and never suffer her to be absent from me many minutes. She gives me all her time and all her attention, and forgets that there is another

object in the world." And again, on another occasion, "The whole management of me devolved upon her; and a terrible task she had. She performed it, however, with cheerfulness hardly ever equalled; and I have often heard her say that, if ever she praised God in her life, it was when she found that she was to have all the labour. She performed it, accordingly, but, as I hinted once before, very much to the hurt of her own constitution." It was to her, as he sat by her side in her last days, that he wrote the touching poem commencing—

"The twentieth year is wellnigh past
Since first our sky was overcast:
Ah, would that this might be the last,
My Mary!

"Thy spirits have a fainter flow;
I see thee daily weaker grow:
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary."

One's own family frequently offers opportunities for the tenderest sympathy; and few scenes are so lovely as a sympathetic family. The sympathy between the German poet

Klopstock and his amiable wife in her last sickness was most delicate and beautiful. She herself looked upon death with composure, but was solicitous as to how her husband would bear the separation. Wishing to prepare his mind for that event, she wrote to him a letter, in which she says,—

"Let God give what he will, I shall still be happy. A longer life with you, or an eternal life with him! But can you as easily part from me as I from you? You are to remain in this world,—in a world without me! You know I have always wished to be the survivor, because I well know it is the hardest to endure; but perhaps it is the will of God that you should be left, and perhaps you have most strength. Oh, think where I am going,—and, as far as sinners can judge of each other, you may be certain that I go there (the humble hopes of a Christian cannot deceive); and there you will follow me. There shall we be forever, united by love, which assuredly was not made to cease."

How tender, thoughtful and comforting!

Of the last hours they spent together, Klopstock gives the following account:—

"When I began to fear for her life (as I did sooner than any one else), I from time to time whispered something in her ear concerning God, but so as not to let her perceive my apprehensions. I know little of what I said: only, in general, I know that I repeated to her how much I was strengthened by the uncommon fortitude graciously vouchsafed to her, and that I now reminded her of that to which we had so often encouraged each other,—perfect resignation. When she had already suffered greatly, I said to her, with much emotion, 'The Most Merciful is with thee.' I saw how she felt it. Perhaps she now first guessed that I thought she would die. I saw this in her countenance. I afterwards told her (as often as I could go into the room and support the sight of her sufferings) how visibly the grace of God was with her. How could I refrain from speaking of the great comfort of my soul?

"I came in just as she had been bled. A light having been brought near on that account, I saw her face clearly for the first time after many hours. Ah, my Cramer, the hue of death was on it! But that God who was so mightily with her supported me too at the sight. She was better after the bleeding, but soon worse again. I was allowed but very little time to take leave of her. I had some hopes that I might return to pray with her. I shall never cease to thank God for the grace he gave me at this parting. I said, 'I will fulfil my promise, my Meta, and tell you that your life, from extreme weakness, is in danger.' You must not expect me to relate every thing to you. I cannot recollect the whole. She heard perfectly, and spoke without the smallest difficulty. I pronounced over her the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. 'Now the will of Him who inexpressibly supports thee, his will be done.' 'Let him do according to his will,' said she: 'he will do *well*.' She said this in a most express-

ive tone of joy and confidence. 'You have endured like an angel; God has been with you; he *will* be with you. His mighty name be praised. The Most Merciful will support you. Were I so wretched as not to be a Christian, I should now become one.' Something of this sort, and yet more, I said to her in a strong emotion of transport. Eliza [Mrs. K.'s sister] says we were both full of joy. 'Be my guardian angel, if our God will permit.' 'You have been mine,' said she. 'Be my guardian angel,' repeated I, 'if our God permit.' 'Who would not be so?' said she. . . At parting, she said to me, very sweetly, 'Thou wilt follow me!' Oh, might I now for one moment weep on her bosom! For I cannot refrain from tears; nor does God require it of me."

Such sympathy makes one seem almost angelical. We know the souls that are to walk in Paradise. The love they bear with them evinces their destiny.

Reader, have you had misfortunes that fling

their shadows along the pathway of life? Are you poor? Do you lack brilliant qualities of mind? And for such things do you repine at Providence? Go to the abodes of the destitute; perform kind offices, listen to life-histories, talk of Christ's sympathy for the poor, of God's promises to the humble who trust in him. Go to the hospital, and behold what you might be physically; go to the retreat for the insane, and behold what you might be mentally; go to the prison, and behold what you might be morally; and in each of these places gladden desponding hearts. Do you yourself long for sympathy, friendship, love? Do you sometimes exclaim, in weariness of spirit, "Oh, earth! earth! earth!" and find in the friendless echo your only answer? There are hearts more desolate than your's,—hearts full of sympathy and affection, and that only need a gentle hand to unseal the fountain.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." We shall soon be done with oppor-

tunities for usefulness; we shall soon meet again each act of our lives at the judgment, and we may there behold the Saviour, not as a stranger, but as a friend, to whose wants we have administered by acts of kindness to his followers.

As one by one of our friends and acquaintances pass away, we may solemnly ask the question whether we have done all we could to make their lives pleasant and to insure their eternal welfare, or whether they have gone to the bar of God as a witness against us.

"Here lies the body of Estella, who by acts of kindness and deeds of charity transported a large fortune to heaven, and has gone thither to enjoy it." Such was an inscription on an Italian monument. Who would not wish that like record might be engraved on his own tomb?

X.

LIFE'S CLOSE AND ITS LESSONS.

ADDISON—LORD ROCHESTER—VOLTAIRE—CARDINAL MAZARIN—HOBBES —PAINE—VOLNEY—SHELLEY—CHURCHILL—GIBBON—HUME—LORD CHESTERFIELD—MADAME DE POMPADOUR—DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM—A MAN OF PLEASURE—GORDON HALL —FLETCHER—WHITEFIELD—THE POET NICOLL —GREAT TRIUMPHS.

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AS the poet Addison lay on his death-bed, he sent for Lord Warwick, a near relative and an erring young man, on whom his pious precepts had fallen unheeded. He had one more lesson to teach, and that a most impressive one. "Dear sir," said the young nobleman, "you sent for me: I believe and

hope you have some commands; I shall hold them most dear." Affectionately grasping his friend's hand, the dying poet said, "I have sent for you that you may see how a Christian can die."

The testimony of the dying is always regarded with interest. There is wisdom in the experience of a lifetime, and it is proper that the verdict of dying lips should impress the mind. A dying man acts himself; every delusion by which he has endeavoured to quiet the clamours of his conscience vanishes; the world can promise him nothing more; the future can afford him no hopes that do not centre in God; his belief in the Deity, in religion, in virtue, rises above every consideration, and he judges himself and estimates his conduct in life in the solemn light of eternity. The scene of Lord Warwick at the death-bed of Addison is impressive,—the giddy youth, on the threshold of manhood, receiving the last solemn lesson of the venerable Christian on the threshold of eternity. What effect the in-

terview had on the subsequent life of Lord Warwick we do not know; but, whatever it may have been in that particular case, a young man may gather the most salutary lessons by contemplating the words and the behaviour of the dying. He may well pause in his reading when his eye falls on a final testimony, and learn to shun the mistakes by which others have made wrecks of their lives, and to practise those virtues that prove satisfactory and enduring.

Dying testimonies show the folly of endeavouring to deceive ourselves in respect to our relations to God. Death corrects our known errors, it crushes our speculative reasonings, and allows our innate consciousness of truth to assert its authority. As death approaches, a man reviews his life, and his motives and conduct are brought into judgment before the tribunal of his conscience; he cannot flee from himself; he cannot stifle his convictions of the right and wrong of the motives that have governed his behaviour; and if, to palliate irregu-

larities in his moral conduct, he has called error truth, he will find it a fearful thing to be undeceived.

John Wilmot, Lord Rochester, was an accomplished nobleman and a favourite of Charles II. He became dissolute, a votary to the wine-cup and to sensual pleasure, and a defender of infidelity. He confessed to Dr. Burnet that for five years his dissipation was so excessive that he was at no time master of himself. The age of thirty-one found him with his physical powers ruined and his prospects of life precarious. His infidel principles forsook him, and, trembling in view of future punishment, he turned penitently to God. During his protracted illness, he published a confession of his errors, declaring that "he left the world this last declaration, which he delivered in the presence of the great God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and before whom he was preparing to be judged, that from the bottom of his soul he detested and abhorred the whole course of his former wicked life." "Oh, remem-

ber," he said to a friend who visited him on his death-bed, "that you contemn God no more. He is an avenging God, and will visit you for your sins, and will, I hope, touch your conscience sooner or later, as he has done mine. You and I have been friends and sinners together a great while; and therefore I am the more free with you. We have been all mistaken in our conceits and opinions; our persuasions have been false and groundless. Therefore God grant you repentance."

"I am abandoned by God and man!" exclaimed Voltaire, in his last sickness. After a long exile, he had returned to Paris in triumph. His name was the signal for enthusiasm. He had even feared that he should expire amid the acclamations which his presence called forth at the theatre. But neither the shouts of the populace nor the assurance of his atheistical friends could stay his faith on his own philosophy in the prospect of the coming judgment. He renounced his opinions, but died in the expectation of future retribution.

"Guenard has said it! Guenard has said it!" mournfully said Cardinal Mazarin, alluding to the declaration of his physician that he must die. He was heard to exclaim, "O my poor soul, what will become of thee? Whither wilt thou go?" To the queen-dowager of France he said, "Madame, your favours have undone me. Were I to live again, I would be a monk rather than courtier." Such were the sober reflections of an ecclesiastic whose boundless ambition had overruled his sense of moral obligation, and whose adroit policy had virtually placed in his hands the sceptre of France. But Mazarin, though awakened to his situation, was too much joined to his politics and pleasures to turn manfully to religion. Cards were one of his last amusements; and, when dying, he ordered himself to be rouged and dressed, that he might receive the flattery of his courtiers on his apparent recovery.

There are hours of sober thought, and times of imminent peril, when the soul seems to forecast the dying hour,—when it starts at the

view of its conscious errors, and utters, as from dying lips, its settled convictions. Hobbes was subject to the most gloomy reflections, and was thrown into a state of terror if left alone in the dark. He declared, on one occasion, that, had he the whole world to dispose of, he would give it for a single day to live. He died with the declaration that he was taking a leap in the dark. Paine, in his last sickness, would cry out with affright if left alone night or day.

Volney, after deriding religion, while sailing on Lake Ontario, was thrown into a state of consternation very inconsistent with his philosophy, as a sudden storm exposed him to imminent peril. Shelley, during a storm at sea, was stupefied with terror, and, when the danger was past, declared to Lord Byron that he had tasted so much of the bitterness of death that in the future he should entertain doubts of his own creed. The poet Churchill, whose life was marked by apostasy from religion and by excessive dissipation, thus writes in a sober hour:—

"Look back! a thought which borders on despair,
Which human nature must, but cannot, bear.
'Tis not the babbling of a busy world,
Where praise and censure are at random hurl'd,
Which can the meanest of my thoughts control,
Or shake one settled purpose of my soul:
Free and at large might their wild curses roam,
If all, if all, alas! were well at home!
No: 'tis the tale which angry conscience tells,
When she with more than tragic horror swells
Each circumstance of guilt,—when, stern, but true,
She brings bad actions forth into review,
And, like the dread handwriting on the wall,
Bids late remorse awake to reason's call,
Arm'd at all points, bids scorpion vengeance pass,
And to the mind holds up reflection's glass,—
The mind, which, starting, heaves the heartfelt groan,
And hates that form she knows to be her own."

There is something mournful in the declaration of Gibbon on the night he completed the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." "It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country,

the lake and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all Nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an agreeable companion, and that, whatsoever might be the future date of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious."

Still more gloomy is the declaration of Hume on reviewing his life and works:—"I am at first affrighted and confounded by the forlorn solitude in which I am placed by my philosophy, and fancy myself some strange, uncouth monster, who, not being able to mingle and unite in society, has been expelled all human commerce and left utterly abandoned and disconsolate. Fain would I run into the crowd for shelter and warmth, but

cannot prevail upon myself to mix with such deformity. I call upon others to join with me to make a company apart, but no one will hearken to me. Every one keeps at a distance, and dreads the storm that beats upon me from every side. When I look abroad, I foresee on every side dispute, contradiction, anger, calumny and detraction. When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and ignorance."

The testimony of gay and worldly-minded people in the decline of life shows the folly of wasting the powers God has given us for noble purposes in the pursuit of pleasure. The voluptuary reviews his life sadly; his pleasures are past, and are, therefore, as though they had never been; his misused faculties rise up in judgment against him; he trembles as he reflects on his own identity.

"I have seen," wrote that gay, fashionable and accomplished nobleman, Lord Chesterfield, "the silly rounds of business and pleasure, and have done with them all. I have enjoyed all

the pleasures of the world, and, consequently, know their futility and do not regret their loss. I apprize them at their real value,—which, in truth, is very low; whereas those who have not experienced always overrate them. They only see their gay outside, and are dazzled with their glare; but I have been behind the scenes. . . . When I reflect back upon what I have seen, what I have heard and what I have done, I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry and bustle and pleasure of the world had any reality; but I look upon all that has passed as one of those romantic dreams which opium commonly occasions, and I by no means desire to repeat the nauseous dose for the sake of the fugitive dream. Shall I tell you that I bear this melancholy situation with that meritorious constancy and resignation which most people boast of? No; for I really cannot help it. I bear it because I must bear it whether I will or no. I think of nothing but killing time the best way I can, now that he has

become mine enemy. It is my resolution to sleep in the carriage during the remainder of my journey."

Who has not heard of Madame de Pompadour, that marvellous woman who for twenty years swayed the destinies of France? She was the daughter of a citizen of Paris, and the wife of a wealthy financier. Possessed of unusual powers of fascination, she determined to win the heart of that voluptuous king, Louis XV. She attracted his attention. He sent for her; and she abandoned her devoted husband and became his favourite and the mistress of Versailles. The king bestowed upon her the title of Marchioness of Pompadour. She was ambitious, and easily usurped the royal prerogative. She sent those who displeased her to the Bastille; she dismissed ministers of state; she made cardinals, declared war, and made peace. A jest of Frederick II. at her expense is said to have been the origin of the Seven Years' War. This guilty woman, whose wretched government did

so much to hasten that awful human tragedy, the French Revolution, became most wretched in the decline of life,—the very objects for which she had sacrificed her honour becoming disgusting and hateful. Listen:—

"What a situation is that of the great! They only live in the future, and are only happy in hope: there is no peace in ambition! I am always gloomy, and often so unreasonably. The kindness of the king, the regards of courtiers, the attachment of my domestics, and the fidelity of a large number of friends, —motives like these, which ought to make me happy, affect me no longer. . . . I have no longer an inclination for all which once pleased me. I have caused my house at Paris to be magnificently furnished: well, that pleased me for two days. My residence at Bellevue is charming; and I alone cannot endure it. Benevolent people relate to me all the news and adventures of Paris; they think I listen, but, when they have done, I ask them what they said. In a word, I do not live; I am

dead before my time. I have no interest in the world. Every thing conspires to embitter my life. I have imputed to me the public misery, the misfortunes of war, and the triumphs of my enemies. I am accused of selling every thing, of disposing of every thing, of governing every thing. . . . This hatred and this general exasperation of the nation grieve me exceedingly; my life is a continued death."

Madame de Pompadour breathed her last amid the splendours of Versailles. The day on which she was buried was windy and stormy. As the mournful cortége moved off from the palace, the king stood at the window, and carelessly remarked, "The marchioness has rather a wet day to set out on her long journey."

Dying testimonies forcibly illustrate the danger of delay in attention to religion. God warns the impenitent, by his Holy Spirit, to attend to their spiritual concerns. Life is uncertain, and its perils unforeseen. God

knows all; he warns wisely, and it is presumptuous to neglect the warning.

There is an expectation which buoys up the minds of those who neglect religion, that a period will certainly arrive when they shall acquaint themselves with God. To such, the words of the dying have a most impressive lesson.

"However I may act in opposition to the principles of religion or the dictates of reason," wrote George Villiers, the noted Duke of Buckingham, a man of wealth and of wit, of the court of Charles II., "I can honestly assure you I had always the highest veneration for both. The world and I may shake hands; for I dare affirm we are heartily weary of each other. Oh, doctor, what a prodigal have I been of the most valuable of all possessions,—TIME! I have squandered it away with a persuasion it was lasting; and now, when a few days would be worth a hecatomb of worlds, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours. . . . You see, my dear doctor,

the apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of their understanding. I am haunted by remorse, despised by my acquaintance, and, I fear, forsaken by God."

"Oh, if the righteous Judge would try me once more," exclaimed a dying man of pleasure and the world, "if he would but reprieve and spare me a little longer, in what a spirit would I spend the remainder of my days! . . . The day in which I should have worked is over and gone, and I see a sad, horrible night approaching, bringing with it the blackness of darkness forever. Heretofore,—woe is me!—when God called, I refused; when he invited, I was of them that made excuse."

Dying testimonies show in a very forcible manner the adaptation of religion to the wants of man, and that without religion life is aimless and incomplete. All worldly prospects are saddened by the fear of death; we lie down at night with the painful consciousness that we must die; we awake, and are startled at our-

selves when we remember that we are mortal; we plan, but fear that we shall never execute; we build, but fear that we shall never occupy; we prepare for ourselves comforts for our declining years, but fear that we shall never enjoy them. An uncertainty veils all the events of the future, and constantly enforces the truth that we have no security beyond the hopes that centre in God. A few springs light up the hills, a few autumns wither the leaves, and eternity is at hand. We cling to our friends; but the thought creeps over us sadly that the old familiar faces will soon gather around us for the last time, and "farewell" fall from the lips that resound with expressions of affection. We behold the pleasant sunlight; but a shadow obscures its brightness as we reflect that we shall soon gaze from the window of our chamber and behold the sun, and feel that it has lighted all the days of our pilgrimage and that we shall never rejoice in its genial warmth again,—that it will roll around the seasons, the orchards of spring will bloom,

the evenings of summer come and go, the autumn, with its fruits, its golden noontides and its withered leaves, pass dreamily by, but we shall know neither changes nor seasons. We shall be what our fathers are now,—dust.

"What is wanting here?" once asked a courtier of a king, in a triumphal procession. "Continuance," was the melancholy answer. Continuance is impressed on nothing earthly: it is the gift of religion alone. Youth cannot continue; worldly honours and pleasures cannot continue; but the joys that the Holy Spirit imparts to the soul will continue amid the pangs of dissolution, will continue coexistent with God. Living, the Christian is the instrument of God's grace, and, dying, of his glory; and, living or dying, he is in the hands of the same omnipotent and merciful Being. The prospects of religion brighten each event of life, and complete the happiness of man by satisfying his longings for a blissful immortality.

"Glory to thee, O God!" exclaimed Gordon

Hall, in the last spasm of Asiatic cholera. He was a man of strong spirit, and beheld in lofty and humane principles the only type of a commendable life. He sacrificed the endearments of home, of country, of friends, he refused positions worthy of his talents and culture, and became a pioneer missionary to India. Death struck him down in the midst of his usefulness. He had made an overland journey of more than one hundred miles to Nassick, where he found the cholera sweeping off the inhabitants in a most fearful manner. Two hundred died on the day before he arrived. He laboured among the terror-stricken people, both as a physician and as a teacher, till his medicines and his books were exhausted, and then began to retrace his steps. On his journey he lay down beneath the veranda of a temple, to rest. He found himself cold, but prepared to renew his journey,—when he was suddenly smitten with the spasms of the pestilence, throwing him helpless upon the ground. He assured the natives that he should soon be with Christ.

Eight hours of mortal agony passed. He then exclaimed, "Glory to thee, O God! Glory to thee, O God! Glory to thee, O God!" The last spasm was over, and the great spirit had gone to its reward.

"I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim before the mercy-seat," said Fletcher of Madeley, as he walked from his pulpit to the communion-table to distribute with his dying hands the sacred emblems. Again and again he sank exhausted on the sacramental table, amid the groans and tears of the congregation; but, by almost superhuman efforts, he completed the solemn service, and then went home to die.

"I go," said Whitefield, in his last memorable sermon at Newburyport, on the day of his death, "to my everlasting rest. My sun of life has risen, shone, and is setting: nay, it is about to rise to shine forever. I have not lived in vain; and, though I could live to preach Christ a thousand years, I die to be with him, which is far better."

The poet Nichol was a young man of great amiableness and moral excellence. His circumstances were adverse, and he pursued humble vocations; but he cultivated his mind with remarkable success during his leisure hours, and obtained extensive literary knowledge. He commenced writing for the press, and met with unusual encouragement; but he allowed mental labour so to absorb his time as to undermine his constitution, and consumption became gradually apparent. He died at the age of twenty-three. His feelings in regard to his genius must have resembled those of the lamented Henry Kirke White:—

> "Fifty years,
> And who will hear of Henry? I shall sink
> As sinks the traveller in the crowded streets
> Of busy London. Some short bustle's caused,
> A few inquiries, and the crowd close in
> And all's forgotten."

But he does not appear to have regarded anxiously the laurels that death was about to remove from his grasp. His thoughts soared

heavenward, and estranged his heart from the world. The sweetest and most touching of his compositions relates to his own death, and was written shortly before that event. It is a death-bed testimony of rare beauty.

DEATH.

I.

The dew is on the summer's greenest grass,
Through which the modest daisy blushing peeps;
The gentle wind that like a ghost doth pass,
A waving shadow on the corn-field keeps;
But I, who love them all, shall never be
Again among the woods or on the woodland lea!

II.

The sun shines sweetly,—sweeter may it shine!—
Bless'd is the brightness of a summer day!
It cheers lone hearts; and why should I repine,
Although among green fields I cannot stray?
Woods! I have grown, since last I heard you wave,
Familiar with death, and neighbour of the grave.

III.

These words have shaken mighty human souls;
Like a sepulchre's echo drear they sound,—
E'en as the owl's wild whoop at midnight rolls
The ivied remnants of old ruins round.
Yet wherefore tremble? Can the soul decay,
Or that which thinks and feels in aught e'er fade away?

IV.

Are there not aspirations in each heart
After a better, brighter world than this?
Longings for beings nobler in each part,—
Things more exalted, steep'd in deeper bliss?
Who gave us these? What are they? Soul, in thee
The bud is budding now for immortality.

V.

Death comes to bear me where I long to be;
One pang, and bright blooms the immortal flower;
Death comes to lead me from mortality
To lands which know not one unhappy hour;
I have a hope, a faith,—from sorrow here
I'm led by death away: why should I start and fear?

VI.

If I have loved the forest and the field,
Can I not love them deeper, better, there?
If all that Power hath made to me doth yield
Something of good and beauty,—something fair,—
Freed from the grossness of mortality,
May I not love them all, and better all enjoy?

VII.

A change from woe to joy,—from earth to heaven,—
Death gives me this; it leads me calmly where
The souls that long ago from mine were riven
May meet again! Death answers many a prayer.
Bright day, shine on! be glad: days brighter far
Are stretch'd before mine eyes than those of mortals are!

"Lord, what is it that I see?" said Lady Hastings. "Oh the greatness of the glory that is revealed to me!" Mrs. Rowe experienced such happiness in dying that she said, with tears of joy, that "she knew not that she had ever felt the like in all her life." "I feel," said Felicia Hemans, "as if I were sitting with Mary at the feet of my Redeemer, hearing the music of his voice and learning of him to be meek and lowly." No poetry, she said, could express, nor imagination conceive, the visions of blessedness that flitted across her fancy, and made her waking hours more delightful than those even that were given to temporary repose. "Dying," said the Rev. S. Medley, "is sweet work! sweet work! Glory, glory! Home, home!" "I have experienced more happiness in dying two hours, this day," said a believer, "than in my whole life. It is worth a whole life to have such an end as this." "Do you find that gloom in death which some apprehend?" asked one of Dr. Henry. "A sweet falling of the soul on Jesus," was the answer.

"Oh, what mercy! what mercy! I don't understand it." "He is coming! he is coming!" said Ridson Darracott. "But surely this cannot be death. Oh, how astonishingly is the Lord softening my passage!" "People have said that death is frightful," said Dr. Gordon. "I look on it with pleasure." "Oh, joyful day!" said Dr. Hammond. "Oh, welcome, welcome, death!" said Hervey. "Welcome joy!" said Eliot. "Lord Jesus, come quickly!" said David Brainerd and Robert Hall. "To-day I shall taste the joys of heaven," said Zimmerman. "I shall go to my Father this night," said Lady Huntington. "What glory! the angels are waiting for me!" said Dr. Bateman. "This is heaven begun," said Thomas Scott. "I see! now I have light," said a blind Hindoo boy. "I see him in his beauty! Tell the missionary that the blind sees. I glory in Christ!"

"Children, when I am dead, sing a song of praise to God," were the dying words of the mother of John and Charles Wesley. The

thrice-repeated exclamation of Gordon Hall in the last spasms of Asiatic cholera, "Glory to thee, O God!" the sublime language of Luther, "Father, into thy hands do I commend my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, thou faithful God!" the memorable words of John Quincy Adams, "This is the last of earth,—I am content;" the beautiful thoughts and anticipations of the Venerable Bede, of Walter Scott and Mrs. Hemans, are all comforting and encouraging to the Christian. But we know of no parting words more sweet and soothing than those of the venerable mother we have quoted.

"Children, when I am dead, sing a song of praise to God." Her troubles would then be ended. Her body would be free from weariness and pain; peace and rest would be its enduring heritage. "Almost well," said the dying Richard Baxter, when asked concerning his bodily state. Death remedies all physical ills. Who would shed tears over deliverance from suffering? The consummation of her desires would then be attained,—to be with

God. The long-wished-for rest that remains for his people, and the oft-contemplated glory of his abode, would be realized. Happiness coexistent with her soul would be secured.

"Out of my last home, dark and cold,
I shall pass to a city whose streets are gold,—
From the silence that falls upon sin and pain,
To the deathless joy of the angels' strain;
Well shall be ended what ill begun,—
Out of the shadow into the sun."

Her spirit would be enraptured. Heaven would be jubilant. Well might her family praise God at such an hour. Who would be sad at a mother's joy? "Who," says an elegant writer, "would save his tears for a coronation-day?"

Happy, thrice happy, is he who, reviewing the days of his pilgrimage in the decline of a long and devout life, and marking, in all the changes through which he has passed, the love and providence of God in answer to his well-meant and generous endeavours, can tune his sacred lyre, and sing,—

"Thy mercy heard my infant prayer;
Thy love, with kind parental care,
Sustain'd my childish days:
Thy goodness watch'd my ripening youth,
And form'd my heart to love thy truth,
And fill'd my lips with praise.

"And now, in age and grief, thy Name
Doth still my languid heart inflame
And bow my faltering knee:
Oh, yet this bosom feels the fire;
This trembling hand and drooping lyre
Have yet a strain for thee.

"Yes, broken, tuneless, still, O Lord,
This voice, transported, shall record
Thy goodness tried so long,
Till, sinking slow with calm decay,
Its feeble murmurs melt away
Into a seraph's song."

Reader, are you doing what you can for your moral and religious elevation and for the welfare of the world? If not, are you satisfied with your life?—Does it pay?

No, you are not satisfied. The thought of death, in a most unwelcome manner, steals upon you at each place of amusement, in each haunt of luxury and ease. The demise of friends fills you with alarm. You awake at night, and are startled at what you are.

Perhaps your general habits are moral. You are merely leading a life of self-gratification. Books, travel, amusement, society, are enlivening your passage—whither? To the bed of death, to the bar of God, to the silence of the grave.

In the lost opportunities of a lifetime a noble character might be builded and a noble reputation obtained. In the wasted moments of a worldly life eternal joys might be secured; in the waste of life for empty titles and superfluous wealth an eternal kingdom and crown might be won.

These passing moments, whether improved or not, are moulding the soul for an eternal destiny.

Says John Wesley, "To candid, reasonable men I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God and returning to God, just hovering over the great gulf, till, a

few minutes hence, I am no more seen. I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing,—the way to heaven, how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way. For this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book! Oh, give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one book. Here, then, I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: only God is here. In his presence I open, I read his book; for this end,—to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does any thing appear dark and intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights. Lord, is it not thy word, 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God'? Thou 'givest liberally, and upbraidest not.' Thou hast said, 'If any be willing to do my will, he shall know.' I am willing to do: let me know thy will. I then search after and consider parallel passages of

Scripture, 'comparing spiritual things with spiritual.' I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable."

There, reader, is an example for your consideration and practice. Farewell.

THE END.